

Journal. (15)
1902-Jan-May.

May



Boston, Mass. to Bethel, Me.

1902.

January 2. Forenoon sunny; afternoon cloudy.

Left Boston at 9 A.M. and reached Bethel about 5 P.M.

All the way from Boston to Yarmouth small flocks of Crows were seen feeding in the fields which were everywhere nearly or quite free from snow or ice. At Oxford we began to see sleighs and at Bryant's Pond and Bethel the entire surface of the country was buried under a spotless robe of snow which, however, nowhere exceeded a foot in depth.

As our train was slowly climbing the steep grade beyond West Paris I saw, from the car window, three birds which must have been Pine Grosbeaks. They were flying over an opening in some birch woods, rising and falling in long, graceful undulations.

Bethel, Maine.

1902.

January 3. Clear and cold with moderate N.W. wind.

Immediately after breakfast the Doctor and I, with several of the ladies of the household, took a walk on snow shoes in the woods below the house. As we were passing under some tall gray birches the call of a Chickadee attracted our attention to five of these birds which, in company with a goodly number of Lesser Redpolls, were clustered in the tops of two of the trees directly over our heads. They were all feeding on the birch seeds which were scattered in showers over the surface of the snow about us. I counted twenty-two Redpolls of which only two were fully adult (i.e. rosy-breasted) males.

1902.

January 4. Clear and cold with strong N.W. wind. Ther. -6 at day-break, +6 at 2 P.M.

In the forenoon the Doctor and I took a long tramp on snow shoes in the Glen Woods revisiting all the old familiar haunts. It was reassuring to find these beautiful woods wholly unchanged or at least unmarred. The numerous sheltered openings were as sunny and attractive as ever, the little brooks murmured and gurgled beneath their coverings of snow and ice, the tall white and red pines, the sturdy rough-barked hemlocks, the needle-pointed balsams, and the olive-green arbor vitae had simply added the growth of another year to their already generous proportions.

There seemed to be more birds than there were at any time last winter. We saw no less than four flocks of Chickadees containing respectively 2, 3, 5 and 6 birds. Some of them were in evergreen woods, others among gray birches. I saw them eating both birch and hemlock seeds. In each flock there was a bird (why is there never more than one?) which quickly responded when I gave the phoebee whistle and after a little while became excited and eager, flitting close about me, alighting within a few feet of my head and answering all my calls with spirit and promptness. I see no difference in habits, behavior or general appearance between these

1902.

January 4. Chickadees and ours at home.

(2). The flock of 3 birds contained also a Hudsonian Chickadee, two Kinglets and a Canada Nuthatch and there was another Nuthatch in the flock of six Chickadees.

The Hudsonian Titmouse kept his black-capped cousins close company during their rambles through some rather open woods of gray birches intermingled with balsams. Like them he was chiefly feeding on birch seeds which he obtained by pecking the cones to pieces, sometimes perching just above them and bending forward to strike down at them, at others hanging back downward beneath them and striking upward. Two or three strokes were usually sufficient to demolish the cone and most of the seeds appeared to be scattered over the surface of the snow beneath and lost. The little bird worked busily and cheerily after the manner of all Titmice. I did not notice that his attitudes or motions differed in any way from those of the Black-capped Chickadee but he was perhaps more restless than they.

I was surprised at the number of Partridge tracks which we saw in the Glen Woods this morning. They were literally everywhere and most of them appeared quite fresh. The birds must be much more numerous than they were last year.

1902.

January 5. Sunny and mild with fleecy clouds drifting slowly before a light west wind. Ther. 16° at sunrise, 28° at 2 P.M.

At 10 A.M. Dr. Gehring, Miss Anna Almy and I started for a walk. On snow shoes we crossed the clearing south of the house and entered the woods beyond where we found what was probably the same flock of birds that we saw there yesterday. It consisted, this morning, of three Chickadees, two Kinglets and a pair of Canada Nuthatches, the Hudsonian Chickadee being missing.

At this point we left the path and turning to the eastward picked our way slowly through the dense growth of gray birches and young balsams until we came out on the logging road which we used to traverse so often last winter. Here we took off our snow shoes for the roadway worn hard and smooth by frequent travel afforded excellent walking save in a few places where it was icy and dangerously slippery.

For a half mile or so beyond where we struck it the road passes through swampy thickets of birches and alders, in which we heard nothing but a Kinglet or two but at the point where it leaves the low ground and begins to ascend a ridge covered with mixed evergreen woods of balsam, spruce, hemlock and arbor vitae an interesting experience awaited us. We had stopped for a moment to look about us and listen when the

1902.

January 5. all-pervading silence was suddenly broken by a prolonged,
(2). varied, and exquisitely sweet and tender song. In form it resembled that of a Goldfinch but it was decidedly longer and much less loud and obtrusive as well as infinitely wilder and more aetherial in quality. Some of the notes suggested the tinkling sound of ice. Although the song was practically continuous from beginning to end it did not flow quite smoothly but tripped or halted in places after the manner of the song of the Winter Wren, to which, indeed, it bore some slight general resemblance. From the first I felt sure that the bird was a Crossbill, probably a White-wing since the notes were unlike any that I have ever heard from Loxia minor; but just after the song ceased I thought I heard the pip call of the latter species uttered faintly but distinctly in the cluster of tall balsams whence the song had seemed to issue. We scanned these trees long and closely but without discovering the bird nor did we again hear his voice. Thus the question of his identity is left practically undecided.

Proceeding on our way we heard, at frequent intervals, in the dense balsams and hemlocks which bordered the roadway on both sides, the slight tzee-tzee-tzee of Golden-crested Kinglets and the nasal, whining calls of Canada Nuthatches. Blue Jays occasionally screamed in the distance and we saw

1902.

January 5. one flitting about a pile of logs in an opening.

(3). As we rounded a bend in the road we caught a glimpse of a Pileated Woodpecker just disappearing around the next bend beyond. Stealing silently on we soon heard him tapping among some dense young evergreen trees. I imitated the sound by striking the palms of my hollowed hands lightly together and presently the big fellow came flying directly towards us just above the surface of the snow giving us a clear view of his black and white plumage and flashing scarlet crest before he caught sight of us and turned back into the woods.

At the lumber camps half a mile further on we heard another Log Cock hammering and shouting among some large yellow birches on a hillside. There were also a number of Canada Nuthatches immediately about the camps.

On our way back we came upon a pair of Pine Grosbeaks among some low, dense alders. The male was a superb fellow, as deep rose red as any that I have ever seen. Both birds kept close together, flitting from place to place among the alders, frequently alighting on some soft, yellowish-colored ice at which they pecked industriously evidently in the hope of getting at the water beneath. The finding of this solitary pair of Grosbeaks interested me greatly for I suspect that they were local birds whose summer home is on some of the

Bethel, Maine.

1902.

January 5. higher mountains of this immediate region.

(4). Dr. Gehring tells me that they are the first that he has seen in Bethel for several years.

I was surprised at the number of Partridge trails seen today. They were simply everywhere along the logging road as far as we traversed it. Evidently the birds had come out into the open to bask in the sun for their trails followed the sides of the road for considerable distances before ~~turning~~ turning back into the woods. There were also innumerable tracks of Rabbits, many of Red Squirrels and Mice, a few of Foxes.

During most of the time that we spent at the lumber camp the hard-wood trees on the neighboring hill side were snapping like pistol shots. The reports averaged at least one per minute and sometimes two or three came in quick succession from different directions. They were fully as loud as the reports of a 32 cal. revolver loaded with black powder. The sun was shining rather feebly at the time, the temperature was not far from 28°, and there was practically no wind. Dr. Gehring found a small, dark colored spider crawling feebly on the surface of the snow.

Bethel, Maine.

1902.

January 6. Cloudy with light S. wind.

The Doctor and I spent about an hour this forenoon in the woods below the house. After traversing the paths we left them and followed up the course of the brook for upwards of a quarter of a mile. The walking was rather open and very level and smooth for the way led over a narrow interval covered with large black ashes and yellow birches which stood well apart with almost no undergrowth. It was difficult to understand what could attract Partridges to such woods but we found the trails of at least two different birds which had apparently been rambling about over a very large extent of ground.

In the woods nearer the house we saw four Chickadees and a flock of about twenty Redpolls. The latter were in larch trees apparently eating the seeds. We also heard a Pine Grosbeak whistling high in air overhead.

1902.

January 7. Snowing most of the day but at no time heavily, only about 2 inches falling. Calm with now and then a breath of air from S.E. Thermometer $\begin{smallmatrix} 18^{\circ} \\ 24^{\circ} \end{smallmatrix}$

Spent most of the forenoon cutting down sapplings along the path in the woods below the house. While thus engaged I heard a Woodpecker tapping near at hand. From the rapidity and vigor of his strokes I suspected that he was a Hairy but to my delight he proved to be an Arctic Three-toed, the first I have ever seen in Bethel. He was in a piece of balsam woods on the trunk of a balsam that had broken off about 25 feet above the ground and was far gone in decay. For fully an hour he did not change his position by more than a few inches although he worked ^{almost} unceasingly, making the chips fly and drilling several irregularly shaped holes deep into the stem of the tree. I stood almost directly beneath him for ten or fifteen minutes without apparently causing him any alarm although he stopped his work once or twice to peer down at me giving me, as he did so, a good view of his rich yellow crown patch. He looked very large - almost as big as a Flicker - and I was strongly impressed with his exceeding grace of movement and superabundant vigor. Without question this is the most energetic and spirited of all our Woodpeckers with the possible exception of the Pileated.

Bethel, Maine.

1902.

January 7. Among these same balsams I heard every now and then the (2). tzee-tzee-tzee of Golden-crested Kinglets and twice what I was sure was the distant creep of a Brown Creeper.

The flight calls of Lesser Redpolls passing high overhead also came faintly to our ears at intervals and a solitary Pine Grosbeak attracted by my answering whistle descended from a great height and alighted in a pine near us, balancing himself on its topmost spray and uttering his clear, penetrating note incessantly. I could not make out his coloring against the white light of the cloudy sky but I do not think he was a red bird.

In the afternoon we went to the Glen Woods. A Pine Grosbeak was heard calling soon after we left the house. As we were passing through the first long opening and descending the slope to the second brook a faint chirp attracted my attention. It proved to be the note of a Chickadee whom I presently called to me by alternately "screeping" and whistling "phoebee". He was quickly followed by three others of his kind and by two Red-bellied Nuthatches. All six birds hopped and flitted close about us until they had satisfied their curiosity when they moved on. To my surprise they were almost immediately succeeded by what seemed to be a second flock consisting of eight Black-capped Chickadees and one

1902.

January 7. P.hudsonicus. These birds collected in the middle of a (3). dense, low cluster of arbor vitae where they remained for a long time hopping about excitedly and uttering incessant scolding cries which at first led me to think they had found a little Owl of some kind but which I finally decided were directed at myself.

Standing within a few yards of the birds I had an excellent chance to watch the Hudsonian Chickadee and to compare his attitudes and behavior with those of his black-capped cousins. I must confess that I could discover no differences of any importance although the Hudsonian seemed to be rather more active and excitable than any of the other members of the flock. He was unquestionably the most voluble making almost as much noise as all the others put together. Although like all the Hudsonian Chickadees which I have ever met he had only two or at most three really distinct calls he combined the notes of which they were composed in so many different ways as to give one the impression that he possessed a somewhat varied repertoire. I noted the following variations on the spot:-

1. Tzi (a simple lisping chirp)
2. Tcheè-tcheè (emphatic yet husky, at times wheezy and broken)

1902.

- January 7. 3. Ti-ti-tcheè (two chirps combined with one husky note)
(4). 4. Ti-tzi-tcheè-tcheè (two chirps and two husky notes)
5. Ti-tcheè-tcheè (one chirp and two husky notes)
6. Tsip or t'chip - a sharp, abrupt challenging call.
7. Tsip-tsi-tchee - The sharp challenge combined with one
chirp and one husky note.

All these notes are perfectly distinct from anything that the common Chickadee ever utters.

The Hudsonian Chickadee seen on this occasion remained in the thicket of arbor vitae, flitting about and calling, long after all the other members of the flock had departed.

Continuing on our way we found two Golden-crested Kinglets among some dense young balsams and flushed a Partridge from a little glen through which flowed a brook encased in a thick covering of snow and ice. The Partridges of the region about Bethel are simply the wildest birds of their kind that I have ever met. They fly the moment they see or hear a man no matter how far off he may be.

On our return we did not see or hear a bird of any kind.

Bethel, Maine.

1902.

January 8. Weather precisely like that of yesterday.

The Doctor and I spent the greater part of the forenoon in the woods below the house. Strange to say we did not either see or hear a bird of any kind. Indeed the only animate creature noted was a Red Squirrel that indulged in an outbreak of snickering among some balsams near where we were at work.

1902.

Bethel, Maine,
to Boston, Mass.

January 9. Clear and mild with scarce a breath of wind.

Started for home this morning by the 8.45 train. At the Grand Trunk Railroad Station in Bethel I saw a flock of fully twenty English Sparrows feeding on some grain that had been scattered about and under one of the freight cars.

In some young sprout woods near the railway station at Oxford I noticed this morning a number of white oaks from 15 to 30 feet in height, some smaller black oaks, and a good many low clusters of bear oak, all these species being readily identified by the leaves of last season's growth with which they were still more or less thickly covered. There were also some rather extensive tracts of pitch pines in the same neighborhood. The last-named tree extends commonly as far to the westward as Norway. None of the oaks just mentioned are known to occur at Bethel.

Birds noted at Bethel, Maine in December 1900,
January, February and March 1901 and January, 1902.

1. Parus atricapillus. December 8' 13^③ 15' 16^{③④} 17^③ 18^{hd.} 19^④ 21' 30^③ 31^③ 1900
 January 1^② 2^{hd.} 3^③ 4^③ 5^③ 6^③ 7^③ 8^③ 9^③ 10^③ 11^③ 12^③ 13^③ 14^③ 15^③
 " 16^③ 17^{③④} 18^{hd.} 20^{hd.} 23^{hd.} 26^④ 31^④ February 1^{3 females}
 (February) 4^④ 12^③ 14^{③④} 16^③ 17^{hd.} 19^③ 21^{2 birds} 23^④ 24^③ 26^③
 March 1^③ 3^{2 females} 7^{*} 1901.
 January 3^⑤ 4^{②⑤⑥} 5^③ 6^④ 7^{③②} 1902.

2. Parus hudsonicus January 4', 7' 1902.

3. Sitta carolinensis. February 24^{③②} 1901.

4. " canadensis. December 16^{hd.} 19^② 1900.
 January 6^{②②} 7^{hd.} 9^{hd.} 12^{2 eating}
 (January) 13^③ 14^③ 16^③ 17^③ 23^③ 26^{hd.} March 3^{hd.} 7^{hd.} 1901.
 January 4^② 5^{7 on} 7^② 1902.

5. Regulus satrapa. December 11^{1 seen} 16^② 18^{hd.} 20^{③④} 31^{1 seen} 1900.
 January 1^{hd.} 3^{hd.} 6^{hd.} 8^{hd.} 9^{hd.} 18^{hd.} 20^③ 23^{hd.} February 2^③ 3^③ 17^{hd.}
 (February) 19^③ 21^③ 26^③ March 1^② 1901.
 January 4^③ 5^{②③④⑤} 7^{②hd.}

6. Certhia f. americana December 19' 20' 1901.

January 1' 3^{hd.} 6^③ 7^③ 13^③ 18^{hd.} 20^{hd.} February 21^{hd.} 1901.
 " 7^{1 heard} 1902.

7. Lanius borealis December 7 (chasing an English Sparrow) 1901.

8. Pipilo canadensis January 5^{②hd.②} 6^{hd.} 7^④ 10^{1 seen} 11^{1 heard} [2^③ 11^{1 seen} 12^{1 seen} 13^{1 seen} 14^{1 seen} 15^{1 seen} 16^{1 seen} 17^{1 seen} 18^{1 seen} 19^{1 seen} 20^{1 seen} 21^{1 seen} 22^{1 seen} 23^{1 seen} 24^{1 seen} 25^{1 seen} 26^{1 seen} 27^{1 seen} 28^{1 seen} 29^{1 seen} 30^{1 seen} 31^{1 seen} 1902

9. Loxia leucoptera? " 5-8 heard but not seen. 1902.

Birds noted at Bethel, Maine in December, 1900,
January, February & March 1901, and January 1902.

10. ✓ Spinus tristis. December 8 ^{light note} _{black} 21 ^{light call of bay} _{black} 1900.

11. ✓ Acanthis linaria. January 3 ^{(22) eating} _{birds} 4 ⁽³⁾ 6 ⁽²⁰⁾ 7 ^{hd.} 1902.

12. ✓ Spizella monticola January 9¹ 20² 1901.

13. ✓ Passer domesticus December 4⁽¹⁾ 6⁽²⁾ 7⁽¹⁾ 1900.
January 9⁽²⁰⁾ 1901.

14. ✓ Cyanocitta cristata December 4^{hd.} 6³ 7¹ 8³ 19¹ 20⁽²⁾ 21⁽³⁾ 30^{hd.} 31^{1 eating} _{bird} 1900.
January 3^{hd} 4⁽²⁾ 6⁽³⁾ 8^{hd} 9^{hd} 13¹ 14¹ 15¹ 18¹ 21¹ 22¹ 23¹ 24¹
" 25⁽²⁾ 26¹ 27¹ 31^{hd.} February 1⁽²⁾ 2¹ 3³ 4^{hd}
(7) February 10^{hd} 12³ 14¹ 16⁵ 17⁽²⁾ 18⁽³⁾ 19⁽³⁾ 24¹
March 3¹ 5³ 7^{hd.} 8⁽²⁾ 1901.
January 5^{1 seen} _{2 heard}, 1902.

15. ✓ Dryotates villosus December 6¹ 22³ 1900. February 28¹ 1901.

16. ✓ " rusticus medianus. January 22² March 3¹ 1901.
" 3¹ 1902.

17. ✓ Picoides arcticus January 7² 1902.

18. ✓ Ceophloeus pileatus January 5² 1902.

19. ✓ Bonasa u. togata. December 16⁽²⁾ 18¹ ^{hook in} _{hook} 1900.
January 6^{hook} _{hook} 7¹ 18^{hook} _{hook} February 19^{hook} _{hook} 21^{hook} _{hook} 1901
" 4^{hook} _{hook} 5^{hook} _{hook} 6^{hook} _{hook} 7^{hook} _{hook} 8^{hook} _{hook} 9^{hook} _{hook} 10^{hook} _{hook} 11^{hook} _{hook} 12^{hook} _{hook} 13^{hook} _{hook} 14^{hook} _{hook} 15^{hook} _{hook} 16^{hook} _{hook} 17^{hook} _{hook} 18^{hook} _{hook} 19^{hook} _{hook} 20^{hook} _{hook} 21^{hook} _{hook} 22^{hook} _{hook} 23^{hook} _{hook} 24^{hook} _{hook} 25^{hook} _{hook} 26^{hook} _{hook} 27^{hook} _{hook} 28^{hook} _{hook} 29^{hook} _{hook} 30^{hook} _{hook} 31^{hook} _{hook} 1902.

✓ Hawk? Feathers of Partridge killed & preserved by John Lincoln Bird &
fry with charcoal. specimens of the latter found in Glen Wood Feb. 21, 1901
State: u. then bird was seen here on a Goose Creek but this is from Larimer.

Concord, Mass.

1902

March 9

Cloudy with S.E. wind and light but steady rain beginning about 9 a.m. and lasting until night. The ground is still nearly everywhere covered with snow to a depth of five or six inches.

I came to Concord late yesterday afternoon and spent last night and most of to-day at the farm returning to Cambridge late this afternoon. The weather was so bad and the walking so difficult that I did not get into the woods. A few Chickadees appeared about the house in the forenoon and I heard Jays screaming in the distance. The only birds seen on the drive to Concord were a Crow and a flock of seven Robins.

When I was at the farm a week ago my foreman, Christian Hansen, told me that he had seen five Partridges the evening before (that of March 1) in a wild apple tree that stands within about thirty yards of the barn just beyond the big elm. Gilbert saw four there and a fifth in another apple tree near by, last evening, soon after six o'clock, but they also saw him and flew off in quick succession a few moments later.

He called me at six o'clock this morning to say that they were again in the tree near the barn. I went into the east chamber of the farm house where I had an excellent view of them. At first I could make out only four or five but before many minutes had passed I counted no less than nine. Scattered all over the tree, a few low down on large branches near the main trunk but the greater number among the smaller twigs near the ends of

Partridges
"budding"

Concord, Mass.

1902

March 9
(no 2)

Partridge
"budding"

The longer upper branches where one or two were perched on the very topmost twigs of the tree, boldly outlined against the gray sky and looking as big as Hen-hawks. All were busily engaged in "budding" an operation which I have never before witnessed to good advantage. It was most interesting as well as surprising to see birds ordinarily so shy and retiring, and so very stately and dignified of bearing, hopping and fluttering about in the top of a leafless, isolated tree near a house with the utmost activity, sprightliness and apparent fearlessness. There were times, however, when they would all sit erect and motionless for a moment avidly looking about and listening.

Those feeding near the ends of the slender branches maintained their foothold with no slight effort, jerking up their tails and fluttering their wings to preserve their balance as they stretched forward or even, for an instant, bent almost straight downwards after the manner of Redpolls or Pine Siskins, pulling off and swallowing the buds in rapid succession with much the same quick, bobbing motion of the head as that of a Hen picking up corn. The supply within reach (at least of such birds as they chose to take) seldom lasted more than a minute or two; when it became exhausted the Partridge would either work its way still further out among the terminal twigs or fly to another part of the tree.

The birds which resorted to the larger branches behaved somewhat differently and with much greater

1902.

March 9
(no 3)

dignity and deliberation owing, no doubt, to the fact that such birds as they were able to obtain grew on short twigs within easy reach of the firm and comparatively broad surfaces of the branches on which they could walk or stand as securely as on the ground.

Partridges
"budding".

Just when these Partridges arrived at the tree this morning I am unable to say. I saw them first, as I have already stated, about six o'clock; they began departing some twenty minutes later, one or two at a time, at intervals of a minute or less, flying straight to the neighboring woods but in three or four different directions, suggesting that they had come from several different places. I feel very sure that all which visited the orchard this morning assembled in the tree near the barn although to reach it they had to pass one or near fifty or more apple trees ^{which stand} between it and the woods. It would be interesting to know whether they have exhausted the supply of palatable buds (they were taken there all or in sufficient numbers, even, to appreciably injure the trees) elsewhere in the orchard or have only just discovered that the buds on this particular tree are especially abundant or savory.

Concord, Mass.

1902.

March 15

Clear with light S. E. wind. A mild but somewhat chilly day.

Robins were singing and calling in the garden at Cambridge this morning and small flocks of Crow Black-birds flying over it. There was also a Flicker "thumping".

I took the 2.05 P.M. train for Concord where Hansen met me at the Station. On the way to the farm I saw nothing beside the Bluebirds, one of which was singing. There was a fourth warbling most delightfully at the farm soon after I got there. A little later a Flicker thumped several times in the big elm where I saw both it and its mate.

Just before sunset when the raw east wind had ^{Bird music} killed the air for fifteen or twenty minutes was filled with bird music of that exquisitely sweet, tender quality peculiar to early spring. Most of it was contributed by two Bluebirds in the red orchard and several Song Sparrows in the alder thickets across the road but there were also one or two Robins singing softly in the distance and Rusty or Red-winged Blackbirds passing overhead at frequent intervals. Besides a few Tree Sparrows which, however, gave only their low trilling call notes which always remind me of the chinking of broken fragments of ice. The only Batrachian voice was that of a Wood Frog who croaked doubtfully a few times in the swamp below the house.

I started two Partridges in the woods but none came into the orchard at evening probably because the snow has wholly disappeared & they can get warm places now. ^{Partridges}

1902.

March 16

(1902)

more in the Ball's Hill woods. Several of them rose from scanty clusters of Asplenium fronds well outside the wood edges.

There is no snow save an occasional wasted drift remaining, even in the densest woods, and the frost is well out of the ground in the open fields and the river wholly free from ice. The season, indeed, is decidedly further advanced than is usual at this date.

Late in the afternoon I took a walk in the woods near the house returning out until dark. There was a violent south-west wind and this with the densely cloudy & very gloomy sky was no doubt the cause of the general silence of our birds. I did not, indeed, hear a single one singing.

As I was entering the woods from the Brick Field I started a dozen or more Robins from a dense young hawthorn in the top of which they had evidently gone to roost for the night as it was nearly dark at the time. They went clambering off in every direction making a prodigious fluttering as they forced their way through the thicket of branches which surrounds the hawthorn.

Benson tells me that very many Muskrats have been shot this spring and that George Holden got seventeen yesterday but Benson's statements are not always quite accurate. I heard only two shots in the direction of the river yesterday afternoon.

1902.

March 16

Cloudy most of the day with strong S. W. wind
in the afternoon.

Went to Ball's Hill in the forenoon walking down
through the woods. Saw or heard very many birds.
A Shrike perched on an oak near the spring was
singing steadily in the usual Thrasher-like strain.
Red-wings were scattered everywhere over the flooded
meadows perched on the trees and bushes uttering
their O-kalees. Rusty Blackbirds were flying back &
forth rather high in air as is their wont. There
were few Song Sparrows near the river and I
saw no waterfowl of any kind but the eye could
not range far over the water because of a light
fog or dense mist. There was no wind until
later in the day and the birds sang almost as
freely at noon as at sunrise. Bluejays were
numerous and noisy. I saw a flock of 20 Robins
in Bessie's orchard, no doubt the same birds which
Gilbert noted there yesterday. There was a Hairy
Woodpecker with them.

The rush of migrating Song Sparrows has either passed
by or not arrived as yet. They were not numerous
anywhere to-day. I saw two flocks, in one place &
then in another. Bluebirds were singing everywhere.
There were two walking near the farmhouse when I
left in this morning & the same two, apparently,
were trying to mate on another when I returned
at noon. One of them was accompanied by its
mate.

I started four Partridges on the farm and four

Concord, Mass.

1902.

March 17

Cloudy with E. wind & light rain in the forenoon.

Bluebirds, Robins, Song Sparrows and a Flicker sang near the farm house for half-an-hour or more early this morning.

At 7.20 A. M. Gilbert and I closed the house and started for Cambridge. On the way to Ball's Hill (we walked down) we heard only a few birds - two Flickers ("chattering"), one or two Song Sparrows and several Bluebirds. Two or three Red-wings were singing along the river.

On the opposite (Bedford) side Song Sparrows were simply swarming in Parker's field and we saw two pairs of Bluebirds near together at the station and then more from the car windows as our train was passing Sturdy Hill nursery.

The most interesting bird of all, however, was a Phoebe. As we were walking along the railroad track approaching the station I heard, faintly but unmistakably, the whee-tut note apparently in an orchard just beyond the fence. The next moment the bird appeared flying close past us down into the flooded meadow where it alighted on the topmost twig of a small willow. This is the earliest date on which I have ever noted a Phoebe at Concord.

An early
Phoebe

There was a Tree Sparrow in full song (the only one I have heard sing this spring) in some bushes near the railroad embankment.

I forget to note in the appropriate connection that as we were approaching Ball's Hill from Brewster's we saw a flock of 9 Golden-eyes flying high over the Hill.

Golden eyes

Concord, Mass.

1902.
March 21

Forenoon cloudy; afternoon clear; light N. wind.
Maximum temperature about 50°.

Took the 2.05 P.M. train for Concord getting off at West Bedford where Gilbert met me. He had just seen (5) Meadow Larks in Mr. Gauthier's field. He crossed to Ball's Hill in the large boat. The river has fallen a foot or more since Monday but the water is still deep over the meadows. It was nearly calm this afternoon and the shores and distant hills, softened by the faintest suggestion of haze, were very beautiful. The whole landscape, indeed, was a look of tenderness and peace most soothing to the senses. There were no birds, however, at least here. Nor did I see any about the cabins where we landed and spent half-an-hour. Gilbert tells me he saw a Gull flying over the river this forenoon.

We walked to the farm. Benson, whom we found at work splitting wood, told me that he saw a Deer in the road near the school house early this morning as he was driving up with the milk. He stood watching him for a moment and then caught the walk into Mrs. Ritchie's field. Benson's dog followed and drove it into the Barrett woods. I found its tracks (perfectly fresh-looking) in the mud within twenty yards of the school house. They were those of a yearling animal & I think, a doe. Christian Hansen saw what was probably the same Deer in the road about half-a-mile north of the farm last Sunday (18th). He has heard that it has been in the Estabrook woods

A Deer
at the
farm.

Concord, Mass.

1902.

March 21
(Wed.)

for two weeks or more and that the dogs have been chasing it a good deal.

A Mongolian Pheasant is also frequenting this neighborhood again this year (there was one here last spring). It was seen by Benson last Monday (17th) in Mr. Howe's pasture very near the school house and by Hansen a few days before this. It is a male bird they say.

A Pheasant
at the farm

Two Bluebirds were singing close to the farm house when we reached it. Robins were calling and Song Sparrows singing at sunset. Soon afterwards Three Myias a Pickering's Myia perched a few times in the meadow across the road. It is the first I have noted this season but Dr. Raugh heard one in West Roxbury on March 1st of this year, an extraordinarily early date. A single Wood Pewee was croaking here on the evening of the 15th.

Gilbert saw an Anthopa Butterfly at the farm this morning and he and I found another fluttering about in the road near Benson's this afternoon.

First
Butterfly.

As I was returning to the house this evening after a walk through the orchard, I heard the sound of a Morwelli wings at first faintly but finally with great distinctness. The bird seemed to be mounting up and in a spiral nearly over the house and I felt sure that it was about to sing, but the whistling soon ceased and no song succeeded it nor did I hear the bird again. This happened about half-an-hour after sunset.

Concord, Mass.

1902.

March 22

Clear with light N. wind. Forenoon rather cool, afternoon oppressively warm. I did not have a thermometer out but the temperature must have risen nearly to 70°.

Bluebirds and Song Sparrows began singing soon after daybreak; Robins not until sunrise; Flickers and a Phoebe still later. The Bluebirds warbled almost continuously all day long. I do not think that I have ever before had such a positive surplus of their music - if anything so delightful can be so-called. They are at their very best now. A couple or two later they will not sing so often nor with such spirit and fervor. There were two males near the house all the forenoon one of them accompanied by a female who inspected all the holes & bird houses flying to the entrance of each and peeping in but not entering any of them.

The Robins were silent through the day but one song for nearly half-an-hour at evening in the top of an elm nearly over the house. He had a strong, pure and very perfectly modulated voice.

The season is wonderfully forward - I might perhaps say, without gross exaggeration, unprecedentedly so. Certainly I cannot recall a year when at this date everything was so far advanced.

Mosquitoes were numerous and actually troublesome in the woods this afternoon - something unheard of if I am not mistaken in my recollection. One of them bit me sharply and a dozen or more tried to do so. All these I caught & examined were of the malarial kind (Anopheles) with hooked

Birds singing
at daybreak,
Phoebe,
Bluebirds

Robins

Early season

Mosquitoes
biting in
March!

1902.

March 22

(No 2)

wings. There are many in the upper rooms of the farm house & the cellar is swarming with them. All, of course, must have lived through the winter.

I saw Butterflies of three different kinds to-day, *Butterflies*
Anthopa and two reddish brown ones of different *& North*
sizes, one with deeply scalloped wings. I also
started a small moth.

Several Wood Frogs were croaking in the afternoon *Wood-Frogs*
and a dozen or more Hylas pupae for a short *& Hylas.*
time just before sunset.

As the sun was setting below the horizon and
sometimes before the Robins and Song Sparrows had
ceased singing a Woodcock began puffing in
the brush grown pasture beyond the brook on the
western side of the road. He did not go up, however,
for fifteen or twenty minutes later, after which he
rose and sang at unusually short intervals. I do
not think that I have ever before heard a bird
that had so rich and powerful a voice. Considered
critically and comparatively it was without question
highly musical, much more so I thought than the
voice of any Bluebird. I watched the bird through
one entire flight but noted nothing new. It was,
in fact, the regular thing in every way. I do
not think, however, that I have ever before known a
Woodcock when singing regularly to alight and puff
in a different place after each descent as this
bird did. He invariably chose a grassy opening of

Song of the
Woodcock.

Concord, Mass.

1902.

March 22

(no 3)

which there are many among the blackberry bushes in this pasture. Perhaps I should note that on one occasion when he was descending, I was nearly certain that I heard the wing whistling & the long notes at one and the same time.

I found perfectly fresh deer tracks on the edge of the woods just below the orchard to-day. They were of the same size as those seen yesterday.

Deer tracks
on the farm

Horned Larks were about all the morning. I did not see them but heard their piping flight calls a dozen different times.

There was also a Red-shouldered Hawk hovering in the distance towards Sumner's woods.

In the afternoon I heard a Purple Finch (the call note only) in the orchard.

The grass is faintly green on sunny banks. It was vividly so on some of the Cambridge Common yesterday.

At evening I heard several Fox Sparrows listening among some young white pines near Purple Rock but I listened in vain for the song. The birds were apparently seeking nests for the night.

Concord, Mass.

1902
March 23

Brilliantly clear with light N. W. wind.

At sunrise this morning I heard the same birds noted yesterday morning & in about the same numbers. The Crows were very boisterous cawing lustily in the trees near the house.

Just before breakfast I saw a Blue Jay hopping about on the ground in a ploughed field very near and then jumping to utter the bell note which he accompanied by an abrupt bobbing motion of the head. His brilliant coloring showed to great advantage against the rich brown earth.

After breakfast I walked up the road for a distance of nearly a mile. The farming country on both sides of the road was simply alive with birds. I have never seen more under similar conditions at this season. There were Robins, Bluebirds, Song Sparrows, Tree Sparrows (2), Juncos (12) (5) / Cow-birds, Chickadees (3), & Meadow Larks, all in full song, and two Downy Woodpeckers, one of them drumming. I also heard two Phoebe singing (one on a bird at the farm). Bluebirds were never for an instant out of sight or hearing. I counted eight pairs besides two odd males. The Juncos were talking but I did not hear their melody-singing. The Meadow Larks were in a field just this side of the Swift farm. I did not know before that there were any in that neighborhood. Red-shouldered Hawks were screaming almost incessantly & I saw one soaring high in air.

Twice this morning I saw a ♀ Bluebird alight in an old Robin's nest and cuddle down in it as if about to lay an egg her mate sitting near at hand singing the while. On

1902.

March 23

(no 2)

each occasion the ♀ remained in the nest for two or three minutes. I am very sure that the two birds were not the same as the locusts were half-a-mile apart. All the ♀ Bluebirds that I saw seemed to be looking for nesting places. The males were warbling through the entire forenoon but with the greatest spirit and frequency from 8 to 9 a.m.

After I went to bed last night I heard the Woodcock peeping and singing until I fell asleep or from about 10 to 10.30 P.M. He rose and sang every two or three minutes. It was bright moonlight at the time. I do not remember ever hearing one sing in the middle of the night before.

Woodcock

sings at

10 P.M.

He was peeping this evening when I got to the pasture at 6.15 although the Song Sparrows were still singing. He made his first ascent at 6.25. I had him continuously within the field of my glass through this and four succeeding song flights. He invariably rose and flew for 100 yards or more (rising at a very slight angle) directly against the wind which was north and rather strong at the time. Then he would turn and begin mounting on a steep spiral incline. Once he turned to the left, four times to the right. He regularly rose to a height of fully 300 ft before beginning to descend. During the entire ascent his wings vibrated incessantly & his whistling was continuous. When it became broken I saw with absolute distinctness that during each pause or interval his wings ceased beating for an instant. I do not think they were moved at all during the

1903

March 23

(No 3)

time he got his song fairly started to that when he reached the earth but they were vibrated a few times at the beginning of the song and I could distinctly hear their vibrating sound mingling with the vocal notes. During the song the bird was constantly descending, at first on long, easy inclines, finally by a succession of short, steep, pitches at the end of each of which he checked himself suddenly for a moment just as the Skylark does. The song ceased when he was about fifty feet above the earth & his final & silent descent to it was made on set wings, nearly vertically and with arrowy swiftness.

While this bird was in the air, rising for his second song flight, I was surprised to hear another peep once just beyond a stone wall & very near me. When the first bird returned to the earth and began peeping again the second answered him several times in precisely the same tone. After this it peeped intermittently, a dozen times perhaps, always when the other bird was on the ground and peeping steadily. At first I thought it was another male & that it would presently mount into the air & sing but as it did not do so and as its peeping was at no time steady or persistent I finally concluded that it was the single note although I have never before suspected that the ♀ Woodcock utters the light-bark like peep. This bird also gave the preliminary pt-c as well.

If I am right in thinking that it was a ♀ both these sounds must be really only call notes. I once heard a wing broken Woodcock utter the peep just as I was about to skin it - or perhaps

Evidence
indicating
that the
♀ Woodcock
utters both
peep &
the note

1902

March 23
(No 4)

just after I had taken it in my hand. I cannot now remember which.

I spent most of the afternoon in Pulpit Rock woods. The wind blew rather strongly & the birds were very quiet. In the pool on the edge of these woods & just below the old orchard a dozen or more Hooded Mergansers crowded through most of the afternoon. The sound of their combined voices was exceedingly like the quacking of ducks. They became silent before sunset after which the Hylas took their places and in such numbers as to make the air ring with their clear peeping.

Shortly before sunset a Great Horned Owl began hooting beyond Birch Hill in the direction of Lawrence's old pine woods.

There was a ♀ White-breasted Nuthatch in the big elm by the house just before noon and again in the late afternoon.

The grass was vividly green in many places to-day. I saw winged insects of many kinds including Blue Bottle Flies, House Flies, and several species of Butterflies.

Concord, Mass.

1902

March 29

Rained heavily through the forenoon; afternoon and evening cloudy, at times misty. Wind S.W. mild.

Took 2.05 P.M. train for Concord. Gilbert met me at West Bedford and rowed me across the river. The water has fallen so that some of the higher points on the meadows are exposed.

At the cabin I found Hepatica nearly ready to open (they were in full bloom in the garden at Cambridge on the 16th). Heard a Fox Sparrow hopping on the hillside and saw one & heard another behind the Hill. Found deer tracks on the conveyance that crosses the swamp.

There were five or six Robins in Benavise's field and a Hairy Woodpecker in the elms near his house. Saw one Bluebird & heard another on our way to the farm.

Late in the afternoon I walked about the outskirts of the cultivated fields near the house. Heard a Bluebird, a Robin, several Song Sparrows and a Phoebe singing and started a big cock Partridge and a large Woodcock both in the Barrett Run. Crows were cawing and two were working about in the cow pasture. Heard a Kinglet & several Chickadees in the woods.

In the opening behind Ball's Hill Gilbert & I noticed this afternoon that most of the branches of a large ground juniper had been cut cleanly off at a height of about 2 ft. above the ground. All the cuts were made diagonally across the branches. In the Barrett run I found a willow apple tree whose lower branches had been pruned

1902

March 29
(ns 2)

at their tips in the same manner. One branch which stretched out horizontally at a height of about five feet had all the terminal twigs cut off. I take this to have been the work of the deer that was seen in the same last week & no doubt the jumper at Ball's Hill was also clipped by the same animal.

Manchons
clipped off
by deer.

I was in the brushy pasture west of the road before six o'clock. At 6.05 a Woodcock began peeping keeping it up intermittently until 6.20 when he made his first long flight. During the next half hour he went up at short intervals many times always peeping in the same place, a circular, grassy opening surrounded by bushes. I hid behind a cedar & saw him alight and jump but it was so dark at the time that I could not make him out at all clearly. From 6.15 to 6.45 there was another bird peeping continuously within twenty yards of the first but during this period it did not once leave the ground although when the other bird was in the air it sometimes kept silent. Its peep was a little fuller & flatter I thought than that of the first. I was sure at the time that it must be the mate of the other & I still believe this to have been so but after I had returned to the house I distinctly heard two birds sing in quick succession. One was just on the verge of our range, the other over the field just across the road. Several times each in the evening I thought three were peeping at once, two near me, the third far off & this was probably really so.

Woodcock

Concord, Mass.

1902.

March 30

Early morning cloudless & most of forenoon sunny but late afternoon cloudy. Day warm at noon. Light N. & E. winds.

At sunrise Robins, Blue birds & Song Sparrows were singing and a Quail calling near the house. The Phoebe did not begin singing until nearly 7 a.m. A little later I saw it & its mate together at the barn. As we were at breakfast a flock of five Juncos came into the elms behind the house & began scratching among the leaves. Two Parula's were drumming in the pine at 8 P.M. At about the same time a Golden crested Kinglet was in full song in the pines near Palfin Rock where I also saw a little company of five Fox Sparrows on the ground among some small pines. Red shouldered Hawks were scanning the whole forenoon in the direction of the river and to the westward. Bluebirds sang through the greater part of the day but their songs are not equal to what they were earlier in the month. I saw flying over the farm Cow-birds, Red-wings, Robins and Song Sparrows. At evening all but the first named species were passing N. & S. in scattered flocks or singly. To some roosting place I suspect.

Starting at 8 a.m. I walked up the trail to the Swift farm, noting every bird seen or heard on the way out, but not on the return. This is the list: - Bluebirds 500 2 ♀♀, Robins 12 (3 ♂), Song Sparrows 18, Juncos 5 (2), Grass Finch 1 (in full, regular song in Lawrence's field), White-bellied Swallow 1 (flying about near Swift's house), Phoebe 200 1 ♀, Flicker 3 (2 ♂), Tree Sparrow 1, Crow 1.

1902.

March 30

(ms 2)

At 9 a.m. I started for Concord where I drove about for an hour or two seeing a number of Bluebirds, Song Sparrows & Robins.

There were a dozen or more Cedar Birds in some spruce trees on the lawn at the Edwin House place and most of them were engaged in catching flying insects humdum which I do not remember me observing before on this season.

Gilbert tells me that he saw a Crow flying into the pines on the Bedford shore opposite the cabin yesterday forenoon carrying building material in its bill. It was sailing head at the time.

During the day I heard four male Phoebe's singing & saw a ♀ with one bird on the farm. The latter thus far has not begun singing much before seven o'clock during the evenings that I have spent at the house here.

I heard the first Leopard 7's legs at Concord this afternoon - a dozen or more of them singing loudly in their Brook meadows. Great numbers of Wood 7's legs were croaking all day long in the pool at the foot of the hill east of the house. They do not seem to croak often after sunset and never I think after dark. When a number are engaged at once their voices sound exceedingly like those of ducks. The Hylas began peeping a little before sunset and for the next half hour hundreds of them were calling in every direction.

1902.

March 30

(No 3)

Walter Dean came from Cambridge and Raymond Emerson from Concord later this afternoon to hear the Woodcock. He went to the pasture soon after 6 o'clock. Raymond was telling us that his brother Markham had seen a large flock of Geese passing northward this morning when I heard faintly but distinctly in the direction of Punkotamut Hill the note of a Canada Goose. The sound increased in volume & frequency until the air was filled with the strangely thrilling, hoarse, clamor. A moment later the flock appeared at as high a height as great that its members appeared scarce larger than Swallows. There were over 100 of the white birds (I counted 112 roughly) arranged at first in a dense column, later they were in a line hundreds of yards in length. They were moving directly northward and long after they had passed beyond our vision their heading came distinctly to our ears.

Raymond also told us that he saw five White-bellied Swallows & his brother found, on the river near the T- way, & that on the 28th he started a Snipe below F. Lewis' Bridge.

I saw six Black Ducks early this afternoon. Raymond says that Whistlers were very abundant on the meadows a week or two ago. He saw upwards of 100 in one afternoon. He has seen only three Shorelarks this spring. I saw a flock of six (3 drakes, 3 gray birds) on the Merrimack near Haverhill, Mass. on the 27th of this month.

Concord, Mass.

1902

March 30

(no 4)

Soon after the first Geese had disappeared we heard the Woodcock. He began popping at Eastern Gray & Virginia intermits among the alders & then flew to his regular station in the little opening, where I have been last evening. His first long flight was normal & we watched him through the whole of it without difficulty. The second time he rose he flew about 50 yards and dropped into an opening beyond a stone wall where another bird, probably his mate, had been popping intermittently. A few seconds later he rose again & performed his normal long flight. This was repeated three or four times in succession as for three or four times in succession he flew from the popping station and alighted for an instant beyond the wall before making his next ascent & popping. Each of these preliminary flights was low and direct (just high enough to clear the tops of the bushes) and during each the bird uttered a low but distinct & incisive grating sound almost exactly like that made by a Red Squirrel while engaged in biting through the shell of a hickory nut. Both of my companions thought this the best comparison that could be suggested. There can be no question that this sound was produced by flying bird which, as I could see distinctly by his small size, was a male. Our impression was that it was a low call addressed to his mate, but we did not see the other bird at all. She (if it was a ♀) performed a good deal this evening but at no time very regularly. She seemed to us to be in a grassy opening about 50 yards from where the ♂ popped. I have never heard this grating call before. It lasted perhaps three or four seconds on each occasion.

Some notes of
The Woodcock

Answering in the middle of the night (at about 2 a.m. I should say) I heard the Woodcock pop three or four times in the pasture beyond the road.

Concord, Mass.

1902.

April 3

Brilliantly clear with light E. wind.

I took the 2.05 P.M. train for Concord this afternoon. On reaching Balls Hill I found the woods and openings as bare and lifeless looking as they usually are at this season. Two hepatica flowers were open in the bed in front of the cabin, however. There is a great field of snow-covered ice in the swamp at the northern foot of Pine Ridge but no snow remaining elsewhere in any of the woods in this immediate neighborhood. The frost is wholly out of the ground in the fields but there is a good deal still remaining in the woods.

The snow

The ice & high water combined played havoc with the river meadows last month. Nearly all the bottom bushes around Beaver Dam Lagoon were uprooted & drifted off and patches of them covering a space as large as the cabin were deposited in the meadows east of Balls Hill.

Bushes uprooted by ice.

The snows of the past winter have also damaged the pines & cedars greatly breaking off the tops of many of the finest of the younger trees.

Pines injured by the winter snows

There were few birds this evening. Indeed I heard none singing save a Robin and a Flicker.

Concord, Mass.

1902.

April 4

Early morning clear & calm. Remainder of day cloudy with fair S. E. wind. The surface of the ground frozen slightly last night and everything was white with hoar frost early this morning.

The three Fox Sparrows which Gilbert saw here on the 2nd & which I found on my arrival last evening were about the cabin most of the forenoon feeding on the millet seed which we put out for them. One of them sang lots over (almost in a whisper & low was most of the notes) at sunrise and two were in full song for fifteen or twenty minutes at about eight o'clock. It was a great treat to hear their wild and beautiful, rich and perfectly modulated voices over now for I was beginning to fear that I should miss the privilege this year. I also heard the trill call and the low, chiding chatter they make while feeding besides, of course, the strong, copying chirp.

Fox Sparrows

There was a Phoebe in full song near the cabin, another at Benson's, a third across the river and a fourth at the farm. As I was lying in bed this morning the Ball's Hill bird sang several times near the open windows of the upper room and a moment later entered it and perched on a pile of magazines on a shelf near my bed uttering his sweetly-harsh phoe-be-c-c, phoe-be several times. I have repeatedly, in former years, known either this bird or another to enter the lower cabin and on one occasion Gilbert saw him alight on an iron rod over the fireplace.

A Phoebe alights & sings on a shelf in the cabin.

Concord, Mass.

1902.

April 4
(Wed)

The Song Sparrows migration seems to be over but Bluebirds are nearly if not quite as numerous as ever. I saw three pairs (two near together) and an odd male and heard three other males singing this forenoon.

Bluebirds
~~abundant~~

The weather has been cold for the past four days and I do not think that many of the birds which were here on the 1st have departed or that many fresh arrivals have come up from the South. There are a few juncos about but I have not seen more than a dozen during any one day thus far. Robins, Flickers, Red-wings & Rusties are present in about the usual numbers.

A call in
migration

Shortly after eight o'clock this morning 4 Black Ducks passed over Ball's Hill at a moderate elevation heading westward & I think on migration.

Partridge
drumming on
Ball's Hill

I heard the Ball's Hill Partridge drumming to-day for the first time this season & in the usual place on the stone wall near the big maple.

Heard Frog-hen nearly ceased croaking; Hylas were piping by hundreds this evening; the English Frog has apparently not fairly begun as yet for I heard only two to-day.

Batrachians

1902

April 5

Cloudy most of the day with strong & piercingly
chilly N. E. wind.

Walked to the farm in the early morning
and back after sunset. Spending most of the
day planting.

A ♀ Hairy Woodpecker appeared in the large
elm at the eastern end of the farm house at about
9 a. m. and remained there for nearly half an hour
hammering away at some decayed branches evidently
searching for grubs. She was much tamer than birds of
this species usually are here permitting me to stand
directly beneath her without showing much alarm
although she did, at first, hide behind the branch
for a half minute or so before venturing to resume
her work. I heard her utter the tsick call repeatedly
and once she made a sound which I do not
remember to have noted before - a rapidly enunciated
kik-kik-kik-kik-kik-kik which was not unlike
the "Ho-ho" of the Flicker but shriller and more
slowly given. This cry may have been a variation of
the Ho-ho-ho-ho rattle of the Hairy but it did
not seem so all like it.

The Phoebe and one or two Fox Sparrows were
singing near the cabin early this morning but
the woods were silent as the grass during most
of the day. I did, however, hear a Grass Finch
singing feebly in the orchard in the forenoon.

1902.

April 6

Forenoon clear & dead calm; afternoon cloudy with chill east wind.

I spent the entire day in the woods on or near Ball's Hill rambling slowly from place to place and giving most of my attention to trees & birds. The latter I saw rather freely at intervals and well into the forenoon but I heard nothing of any particular interest. I saw no less than ten Black Ducks, two pairs and a flock of 4. All were flying rather low down and directly northward. As the flock passed one or two of the ducks kept up a continuous low, wheezy quacking (the voice of the duck is not really a quack at all).

For an hour or more at about noon the Swamp Frogs were croaking by hundreds all over the Great Meadows producing a volume of sound that equaled anything I have ever heard from them here before. It is the first time this season when they have been in really full cry.

I was mistaken in noting the other day that the Wood Frogs had about ceased their spring croakings for this year. They were croaking by scores this afternoon in both of the little ponds just behind Ball's Hill.

Hubert Holden told Gilbert that on his way down river this morning he saw a Great Horned Owl & three Doves.

1902.

April 7

A November-like day with heavily clouded sky and cold east wind.

At day break I heard one Ball's Hill Phoebe singing vigorously and a Fox Sparrow also uttered a few bars of his glorious song very near my window. There was a Flicker starting in the distance & on or two Red-wings long for a few minutes. Just after breakfast I heard a Meadow Lark on the opposite side of the river.

During the remainder of the day the birds maintained a peevish silence and I saw only a very few. At evening there was absolutely no singing save even of Robins. Just before sunset several small flocks of Red-wings & Rusties passed one towards the N. E. This has happened regularly at about the same hour for the past few evenings. I think these birds must have a roost somewhere in the direction of Corbair bridge but it is possible that they are migrating.

Beverly, Mass.

1902.

April 8

Cloudy with violent and piercing cold N.E. wind which brought heavy rain in the afternoon & evening.

We are having one March in April this year. It would be difficult to imagine a more gloomy and forbidding day than this has been and rarely have I known one when the woods and fields seemed more barren of animal life. I cannot understand where the birds conceal themselves at such times. I do not think I saw and heard more than a dozen in all to-day although I was in the woods and openings from early morning to late afternoon. At day-break the first bird to sing was a Robin followed, some fifteen minutes later, by a Phoebe. A Fox Sparrow sang once still later. After breakfast I heard a Red-wing and at about ten o'clock the ~~phoebe~~ note of a Chickadee. These were actually all the birds I heard during the entire day besides a few Crows cawing, some Jays screaming and a Golden-crest ~~ze-ving~~. I saw one Song Sparrow, a Starling, and a few Robins. One might easily get a longer list of species during a fine day in mid-winter.

I cannot understand where the White-bellied Swallows are keeping themselves. During cold, cloudy, stormy weather they usually congregate under the lee of Halls Hill but there were none there either yesterday or to-day. Perhaps only a very few have come as yet.

Concord, Mass.

1902

April 9

The storm which began yesterday afternoon increased in violence through the night reaching its climax early this morning. The north-east wind blew a living gale and the rain for hours after hours came down as heavily as it often does at the height of a thunder shower.

In spite of the noise & turmoil of the elements our Bells Hill Phoebe began singing soon after daybreak and with but few interruptions kept it up until well into the forenoon.

The Fox Sparrows also sang freely & well near the cabin but I heard no other birds until later in the day.

The rain ceased about noon but the N.E. wind blew with only slightly abated force and the air was thick with driving mist until nightfall.

I went to the farm in the afternoon having a Crested Dove cooing in Prescott's Pine and a Partridge drumming in the Barrett Pine.

On the way back I heard three Robins singing and saw a Marsh Hawk (a ♀ I thought) flying over Pine Park.

Concord, Mass.

1902.

April 10

Cloudy with cold N.E. to N. wind and frequent showers of fine rain. In the forenoon it snowed for a few minutes. The wind fell at evening and the air seemed warmer.

Our Phoebe and a Fox Sparrow were singing near the cabin shortly after daybreak. An hour later I saw two White-bellied Swallows flying over the river. A Chickadee was also whistling near at hand.

On reaching Birch Field at about 9 a.m. I found two Carolina Doves cooing near the spring. They were perched on the tops of large oaks about fifty yards apart and seemed to be answering one another. Both flew as soon as they saw me going off in different directions. An hour later one began cooing in the woods on the opposite (N.) side of the field.

A Partridge drummed most of the forenoon in the woods just mentioned. This is a new drumming station although I have frequently heard birds on the South & West side of Birch Field.

The strong, cold N. wind seemed to have banished nearly all the birds from the immediate neighborhood of the farm house where I spent the afternoon. Indeed I noted there only a solitary Junco, a Robin or two and a Bluebird. I heard two Song Sparrows singing, however, in the distance towards Lawrence's.

Concord, Mass.

1902.
April 10
(no 2.)

My walk back to the cabin this evening proved exceptionally interesting. It was nearly six o'clock when I started. The mist-laden air seemed comparatively warm but this was perhaps due chiefly to the fact that the wind had lulled to a mere breath. Robins were singing in every direction, far and near, There seemed to be a dozen or more of them calling & a few singing, among the dense pines behind Ball's Hill.

As I was passing through Brick Field two Great Horned Owls began hooting. They kept it up for about ten minutes during which I remained in one spot listening to them. One which was evidently in Lawrence's pine woods beyond the Green Field regularly uttered five notes (hoo, hoo-hoo, hoo, hoo) in slow, measured, impressive tones. The voice of the other bird was pitched much higher and the eight notes which he invariably uttered (hoo, hoo-hoo-hoo, hoo-hoo-hoo, hoo) were given more rapidly. I have repeatedly noticed a similar difference in the number and arrangement of notes when two of these Owls are answering one another and I believe that one form is characteristic of one sex and the other of the opposite sex although I have no impression as to which is peculiar to the male and which to the female. On this occasion the deep-voiced bird with but five notes immediately hooted first. The other always began hooting immediately after the first had ceased and several times it cut in on the latter before it had finished its hoost.

Hooting of
Great Horned
Owls.

Concord, Mass.

1902.

April 10
(no 3)

As I have just said I listened to these Owls until they ceased hooting. Indeed I could not tear myself away for the sound of their voices thrilled and fascinated me as it always does. It was peculiarly impressive this evening owing to the perfect keeping with the gloomy weather and to the fact that it had a wide margin of silence the distant notes of a Robin being the only other sounds that broke the otherwise perfect stillness.

As I was crossing Barrett's pasture my attention was attracted by a light silvery whistling of wings & looking up I saw a pair of Black Ducks speeding low down over the land towards the Great Meadows. They were closely followed by a flock of four Golden-eyes whose wings made a similar but decidedly louder sound, and a few minutes later I saw a flock of four Black Ducks pursuing precisely the same course.

On reaching the causeway that crosses the swamp behind Ball's Hill, I stopped to listen to the Robins that were singing & calling all about me. Suddenly, almost at my feet, a Meadow Mouse started out from the bank and swam across a broad space of open water a foot or more in depth. It moved with great rapidity (certainly much faster than a muskrat) and nearly its whole body seemed to be out of water giving me the impression that it was running on the surface rather than swimming.

Concord, Mass.

1902.

April 11.

Cloudy most of the day but the sun shone for a brief interval in the forenoon and again at sunset. Light rain in early morning. Wind N. to N.W. light. Temperature higher than for several days past.

Early this morning I heard singing near the cabin and Phoebe, one or two Fox Sparrows, a Robin, a Song Sparrow and a large flock of Red-wings. The last named made a tremendous noise although they were at some distance and I think on the opposite side of the river.

At the farm, where I spent the day transplanting trees, I saw or heard several Robins, a pair of Bluebirds, a White-bellied Swallow (which alighted on one of my bird houses & perched into the hole), a Field Sparrow (singing in the pasture west of the house), a Grass Finch singing (I heard nowhere near Pine Park), a Dove cooing near the spring, several Crows and one or two Blue Jays.

The Phoebes were flitting about the barn all day and shortly after noon I saw one of them take several bill-fuls of building material to the ledge under the eaves where the pair nested last year. Apparently they had only just begun the new nest to-day for it had not advanced sufficiently to be visible from the ground below.

Phoebe
building
at the farm.

Gilbert reports seeing a Robin beginning her nest on the same branch of the isolated pine near the West Bedford station where a bird nested last year.

Robin
building

Concord, Mass.

1902.

April 11
(No 2)


The Phoebe at Ball's Hill appears to have chosen the stone stable (built last autumn) as his summer home but I do not think that he has as yet secured a mate. He is, as I have already noted, a cheerful and persistent singer, more so, I think, than any of the other birds in this neighborhood. The songs of different notes of this species do not vary appreciably in either form or tone. All of them have two notes which are usually given alternately - phoe - oe - e? (with rising inflection), phoe - ba (in lower key & falling inflection). The first note is invariably of three syllable, the middle one being the least conspicuous & uttered in a rolling tone. Our Cabin Bird sometimes repeats the second note three or four times in succession before alternating again.

Three Partridges were drumming at the farm to-day one near the head of the run, another on the stone wall west of Pulpit Rock, the third on the water side of Buck Field. I also stalked a pair of birds from beneath a low spreading apple tree near the middle of the orchard, this hopping at about 9 a.m.

Shortly after sunset, as I was nearing the Cabin, following the river path, I saw about 60 yds ahead of me standing erect in the middle of this path a fine cock Partridge. He had evidently come down from the hill to drink for he was on the very edge of the water which had partly covered the path to-day. I stopped & watched

1902.

April 11
1893/

him for several minutes. He evidently saw me for he seemed ill at ease & for some time kept up the peculiar low growling sound which Partridge makes when disturbed or suspicious. Presently he began walking away from me keeping in the middle of the path & following the water's edge closely. He carried his tail raised  and frequently twitched his expanded wings in an abrupt nervous manner suggesting irritation. After growling for half a minute or more he called quet, quet a number of times and then began making the chattering or chattering sound which is closely resembles that of the Red Squirrel. At length he left the path and began making his way up the steep hillside. I now increased my pace and he at once did the same until he finally made a short quick gliding run & then took flight. While in the path his gait was a rather slow and highly dignified walk. Altogether I had been in view for fully three minutes. The Boise Hill Partridges are so accustomed to our presence & so fully assured that we mean them no harm that we often see them on the ground but it seldom that I have as prolonged a view of one as I enjoyed on this occasion.

I have heard very few Hylas of late & none proper to day. The Frogs have not begun breeding as yet.

1902.

April 12

A bright, beautiful day sunny the greater part of the time but the sky filled with masses of dark clouds driving rapidly before the strong West wind.

Our Balls Hill Phoebe began singing at sunrise this morning and at breakfast time he appeared at the old cabin accompanied by a mate. Both birds kept flying up under the eaves examining every nook & crevice evidently looking for a nesting site. I think, however, that they will probably nest in the stone stable where I have put up a shelf for them.

The Fox Sparrows were gone this morning but a single Tree Sparrow was flitting about in the bushes in front of the cabin and while we were at breakfast he sang a number of times.

Robins appear to have greatly increased in numbers within the past few days. The whole Balls Hill region was swarming with them to-day and at evening they were singing in every direction.

Pat Flannery reports seeing a flock of ten Black Ducks which he started this morning near the railroad embankment on the south side of the meadows.

A Grass Finch was singing very sweetly at evening in Thomas's pasture.

Hepatica in full bloom in front of the cabin. Blood Root almost in blossom at the farm yesterday.

1902.

May 1

Partly cloudy with light showers in forenoon.

Took the 5.01 P. M. train for Concord. As we passed the E. Lexington station I was surprised to see that a considerable part (more than one half, seemingly) of the upper reservoir was bare mud flats. The pumping station there was discontinued more than a year ago but the water was kept at its normal level through last summer and autumn and I think the Grebes bred there in their usual numbers. They will probably have to go elsewhere now that the water has been drawn off although there are still some broad ditches full to the brim and apparently an acre or two of pond on the northern side of the reservoir.

Passing of
the Grebes'
breeding place
at E. Lexington

The vegetation is remarkably far advanced. At Cambridge pear trees are in bloom, cherry trees shedding their petals, and horse chestnuts in early full leaf. Here the shrub bushes have unfolded a few blossoms, the willows and poplars as well as the white maples are covered with leaves perhaps one quarter grown & even the leaves of the oaks have burst their buds & tinge the trees with pink and salmon.

Vegetation.

Bank Swallows, Chipping Swifts, Brown Thrashers, Blue & White Cuckoos are all here. I heard two Carolina Rails this evening out in the Great Meadows which are still partially covered with water.

Hyles, Boreal Frogs and Ricketts Frogs are making frogs & a tremendous din as I write. I heard Toads in Cambridge today. Toads.

1902.

May 2

Brilliantly clear, the early morning cool with light north wind, the middle of the day calm and hot, the afternoon cool again with fresh E. wind.

With the first signs of daybreak a Thrasher began singing near the cabin. Before the light had broken at all strong he was followed incessantly by a Phoebe, Song Sparrow, Robin, Swamp Sparrow, Towhee, Bittern, Blue Jay and Chickadee. With broad daylight Crows and Red-wings joined in. Still later I heard Yellow-rumps & a Peewee Bird. There was but little singing between sunrise and 7 a.m.

I spent the forenoon at the farm, working both ways, the afternoon in the woods between Boll's & Davis's Mills. The country was alive with birds. I noted all the Swallows, and heard singing from Mourner Thrashers, Fox Towhees, then Field Sparrows, two Grass Towhees, a dozen or more Black & White Cuckoos, two Black-throated Green Warblers, then Oven-birds and then Song Sparrows.

There was a Quail at the farm somewhere in the Raspberry pasture east of the road. After calling a few times he gave a dozen or more exclamations of bob, whit.

I saw no less than four Black Snakes, two of them large ones. One of them glided swiftly down a hillside into a swamp and after I had kept still for a few minutes returned passing very near to them and raising his head at least a foot above the ground to look and listen.

1902.

May 2
(No 2)

The Ball's Hill Phoebe have built a nest in a tray made of a wireless box which I put up for them in the stone house-shed. Gilbert tells me that they began this nest on April 18th. It looked finished to-day but the bird was not sitting. The pair at the farm have a nest under the eaves of the barn where they built last year. They seem to have abandoned the barn cellar perhaps because there are so many rats there. There is a third pair at Benson's shed (where they usually nest on the outside of the high foundation wall) and a fourth at my stone boat house across the river where they began a nest about a week ago on the deck of a canoe that is slung to one of the beams. This nest is still unfinished & I fear they have deserted it.

Our Ball's Hill bird sings only in the early morning now. Last evening and again at noon to-day I heard him utter many times in succession a low, exquisitely plaintive and tender pit-e, apparently a note of endearment to his mate (who was with him on both occasions) and wholly new to me.

The air rings and pulsates this evening with the peeping of hundreds of Hylas and the trailing of dozens of Toads but the Scorpion Flies are much less noisy than they were last night.

I heard a Tree Toad in the old orchard at the farm this morning.

One of the apple trees at the farm opened a few of its blossoms to-day - a very early date.

Phoebes

Flies &
Toads.

First apple blossoms.

1902.

May 3

Cloudy clearing about 4 P.M. Light rain in early morning. Wind E. - Cool.

Arrivals.. Yellow Warbler, 1 singing at 6 P.M. on W. Bedford shore opposite Ball's Hill; Nashville Warbler, 2 singing in woods on farm; House Warbler, 1 singing in Prescott's pines; Least Flycatcher, one at Ball's Hill, another in apple orchard at the farm, both calling whit. Maryland Yellow-throat, 1 singing at morning & evening near the stone boat house.

Birds sang freely through the forenoon. They did not seem to be as numerous as they were yesterday. At evening only a few Robins & a Swamp Sparrow sang.

While at the farm this forenoon I heard a Dove cooing and presently saw the bird perched in the top of a tall tree over the road just below the house. He was surrounded by a mole who was feeding on the ground in the ploughed field in front of the house. As I stood listening to the mole it struck me that the solemnity and impressiveness of this Dove's cooing is due not so much to the quality of his voice as to the carefully measured intervals between the notes. I noted the rendering of the cooing: - oo-ee-oo; coo, coo. Sometimes the bird gave only the first three notes and occasionally only the oo-ee. While cooing he sat rather erect but in an easy attitude. I could not see that he accompanied the notes by any movements of the head or neck.

The Phoebe at the farm was sitting to-day.

Small apple trees had opened many of their blossoms.

1902.

May 4

Forenoon brilliantly clear; afternoon cloudy with
chill S.E. wind; light rain 5-7 P.M.

I did not awake until nearly seven o'clock this
morning & then the birds had nearly ceased singing.
At breakfast time I heard a Redstart in front
of the cabin and soon afterwards saw the bird, a
fine old male no doubt the one that has nested
here for several years past.

First Redstart

Another arrival was a Yellow-throated Vireo which
I heard singing fitfully in the large oaks on
Holden's Hill.

First Yellow-
throat Vireo

Still another was the Spotted Sandpiper of
which Herbert Holden saw six on his way down
river

First Spotted
Sandpiper

Mr. Holden also tells me that Quail are numerous
this Spring in the eastern part of Concord. I
have only one in this neighborhood - the bird
at the farm.

Quail

Red-shouldered Hawks were making the air
ring with their wild voices this morning in
the direction of Holden's Hill but I looked in
all the large trees there without discovering a nest.
I do not think they have bred there or, indeed,
anywhere on my land for several years past
yet they visit my woods daily. I started one
the other evening from the pines in the Glacial Hollow.
It was so nearly dark at the time that I think
the bird had gone to roost there.

Red should'd
Hawks.

Small birds were unmistakably fewer this
morning, more so, indeed, than for several days past.

Few small
birds about.

1902.

May 4
(no 2.)

Of the species which arrive at about this time or a little earlier only the Brown Thrasher, Black & White Creeper and Towhee seem to have come in any numbers. Of the others such as the Nashville, Wesm., Black-throated Green and Yellow Warblers, the Redstart, the Maryland Yellow-throat, the Yellow-throated Vireo and the Least Flycatcher only the advance guards have as yet reached us.

Migration

There are apparently as many Red-wings as usual but I see them oftener still in large flocks about the inland fields and not along the river, where the meadows are still covered with water.

Red-wings

Robins have been very abundant all through the Spring, as they were last year. They sing but little now except in the early morning. Pat reports seeing a nest with two eggs yesterday.

Abundance of Robins

Neither Gilbert nor I has seen or heard a mouse of any kind about the cabins since we came here three days ago. We have had no rats at Kelli's Hill for two or three years but they are simply swarming this Spring on the farm.

Mice & Rats

The Hylas were jumping by hundreds in the meadows at the west end of Kelli's Hill and all over the Great Meadows last evening and this. Leopold Frogs do not seem to have been very noisy of late. I have heard neither Bull nor Green Frogs as yet.

Frogs.

1902.

May 5

Heavy rain just before day break. Most of day cloudy with cool W. wind. Calm and pretty at evening.

Rough Breasted Grosbeak, ♂ sang once rather freely & busily at 9 a.m., in swamp behind Boll's Hill; Solitary Vireo, one in full song at 8 a.m. on Boll's Hill; Vireo one seen by Gilbert near cabin, one calling at evening in Boll's Hill swamp; Kingbird one performing song flight at evening near cabin; Swarson's Thrush, one giving the heer note and the whining call away dense young pines on Pine Ridge at 5 P.M.

Arrivals.

Of the birds which have been noted before there seemed to be no increase in numbers to-day.

Birds sang freely most of the day. Two Thrushes gave me almost a surfeit of their fine music. One was across the river near the stone boat house, the other on the edge of Pine Point.

Gilbert discovered the remains of a ♂ Red-wing which had evidently been killed and eaten by a Hawk & which lay scattered about on the ground in a cluster of dense white pines behind Boll's Hill. There were nearly all the feathers (including some of the scarlet ones from the epaulettes) and the head or, at least, the bill and fragments of the skull which had evidently been crushed to expose the brains which had not been removed & no doubt, eaten.

Although the evening was perfectly calm & oppressively warm upwards of thirty Robins assembled to roost in the swamp behind Boll's Hill. They kept up a constant fluttering as they settled themselves among the blueberry bushes & fir or top of the mules was often singing at once.

1902.

May 5
(no 2)

In Holden's Hill meadow I heard the other evening (May 3) a double note something like the phew-c of a Quail or the che-c of a Crested Rail but yet different from both these calls. It was given only once & very near me - within twenty yards certainly. At the time I set it down for some unusual call of a Hyla. To-night I heard it again - six or eight times at intervals of half-a-minute or more, in the little meadow at the western end of Roll's Hill. On both occasions it mingled with the voices of hundreds of Hylas but this evening I had a good chance to study it critically and I quickly came to the conclusion that it was the note of some bird that was in the marsh. It was distinctly Rail-like yet too different from any Rail ever known to me to be referred to any of our common species. I cannot imagine what it could have been made by unless by a Yellow Rail. I certainly have never heard it before.

A strange
bird note.

The Hylas were making a tremendous din this evening. There were also a good many Leopard Frogs croaking and a few Toads calling while a Bull Frog trumpeted over in Louisiana tones.

Frogs
Frogs
Bull Frog.

I saw the first Dragon Fly to-day. It was skimming about in a pasture & looked like the big species so common in upland fields & woods & in Lake Ontario.

First
Dragon Fly.

Strange to say I have heard no Rails since the 1st. The Billies were silent to-day. Mosquitoes numerous this evening.

1902.
May 6

Brilliantly clear. Wind light from N. in A.M.,
fresh from E. in early P.M., strong from S.W. at evening.
Early morning & late afternoon cool; middle of day warm.

Chestnut sided Warblers arrived last night. I
heard one singing near the cabin at sunrise and at
least two others in the swamp behind the Hill later
in the day.

Arrivals.

There was also a fresh flight of Parula Birds.
I saw two near the cabin, two more at the E. end of
the Hill and three near Bensons.

The Yellow-rumped Warblers were also more
numerous than they have been for several days past.

As I was standing on the edge of an opening on
Pine Ridge early this afternoon all the small birds within
my hearing (they were a Black-throated Green Warbler, Chipping,
Song Sparrow, Cooper Sparrow and then White-throated Sparrows)
suddenly ceased singing and joined in a chorus of throat
pumping, low, yet shrill and incisive, cries of warning which
are as surely indicative of the near presence of a Hawk
as are the well-known notes which domestic fowls make
when similarly menaced. Looking up I saw a beautiful
Luteal & Sharp-shinned Hawk. He passed nearly overhead
giving me a good view of his slaty blue back and
alternately, flapping and gliding on set wings was soon
lost to sight among the pines. It was several minutes
after he had passed before any of the little birds began
singing again. Quite evidently they distinguish the dangerous
from the harmless birds of prey. They paid not the slightest
attention to a Marsh Hawk which screamed equally

1902.

May 6
(No 2)

low over the Thickets at the east end of Hall's Hill
a little later and the Red-shouldered Hawks which
soar and scream every morning over the Hall's Hill woods
never appear to alarm them.

I was somewhat surprised to hear a Wilson's Thrush
sing three or four times at about ten o'clock this
morning on Pine Ridge for I noted the first bird of
this species yesterday and it is unusual for them
to begin singing for several days after their arrival
which they are sometimes silent for a week or more.

At 4.30 P.M. a flock of four Black Ducks
passed over Pine Point in the direction of Great
Meadows where I think they alighted for they
lowered their flight abruptly just as they passed
beyond my sight (I was on Pine Ridge at the time)
over the belt of trees ~~about~~ ^{near} the river bank.

There must have been some of our summer resident
birds. I am by no means sure that they breed
in this neighborhood but incline to think that
they come from the Cambridge Region. Walter Deane
tells me that a Black Duck's nest with 13 eggs
was found at Rock Meadows, Belmont about two
weeks ago. It has been visited by many people
interested in birds and among them by George Deane.

1902.

May 7

Cloudy most of the day clearing at sunset.
Forenoon cool with strong S.W. wind. Afternoon calm
and sultry. Evening cool again with brisk N.W. wind.
Heavy rain before day broke this morning.

Birds continue to struggle in a few at a time
from the South. The only arrivals noted to-day were
a Tanager which began singing soon after 1 P.M. on
Ball's Hill and kept it up at intervals until evening
and two Cat Birds, one of which was singing, that
I found after sunset in Pine Park. The numbers
of Yellow-rumps remained about the same as
yesterday but all the White-throated Sparrows
which were here yesterday had departed this morning.

Arrivals

Our Phoebe has become almost totally silent
these past few days. I heard him singing to-day
for only a few minutes in the early morning.
On examining the nest this afternoon I found
that it contained three eggs.

Phoebes
nearly
silent

During the calm, sultry period this afternoon
all the birds in the Ball's Hill region seemed
to be singing at once and with exceptional
spirit and joyousness.

I have thought for several years past that our
Grass Finches do not sing nearly so freely and well
in spring as during the month of July but the bird
in Beusen's pasture has been pouring out his song loud
from early morning to late evening ever since I arrived
here on the 1st of the present month.

Grass Finches
singing
freely all
day long.

1902.

May 8

Brilliantly clear with light N. W. wind. Cool at morning & evening, A. perfect day.

From shortly after day break to 8 A. M. and again Arrivals just before sunset a Bobolink was in full song in the meadows across the river. This is the third consecutive year when this species has arrived in Concord on May 8.

Baltimore Orioles also came to-day. One was flitting the whole forenoon near the farm house and Gilbert saw another in Benson's apple tree.

The only other arrival was the Wood Thrush of which I saw a silent and remarkably tame individual among the oaks on Davis's Hill.

Oven birds have increased greatly in numbers since yesterday. On my way to the farm this morning I found no less than twelve singing.

Partridges were out in force this afternoon. Shortly after five o'clock I heard no less than three drumming near Pulpit Rock one on the stone wall at the foot of Barrett Run, another on the wall at the western end of Birch Field, the third near the spring. I also heard several others. One, a Cope's Cock Bird, uttered just as he flew from a stone wall and for the first thirty yards or more of his flight a guttural wee-ee-ee, wee-ee-ee, wee-ee-ee. This is the ordinary flight note of alarm.

I stalked the drummer at the W. end of Birch Field with the utmost care & espied him sitting in a crouching elegant posture on his drumming stone. As I was well concealed by dense young pines & had made no noise I felt sure

1902.

May 8

(No 2)

that I had at length succeeded in obtaining a Massachusetts Partridge unaware and that I should presently see him drum. But after sitting perfectly motionless for a minute or two with his head turned away from me he suddenly straightened himself up, gave his tail a sharp upward flit and jumped down on the further side of the wall. Crafty Bird! He was no doubt watching me keenly from the very first moment that I got sight of him.

The wild apple tree in front of the barn at the farm which the Partridges liked so persistently (every night & morning for a week or more) last March was in full bloom to-day and I have never seen a tree more crowded with blossoms. This confirms what I have long believed viz. that Partridges were injured either the trees or thin crops of fruit despite the popular impression (among the farmers especially) to the contrary. It is certainly a trifle difficult to understand why they do not do so for on the morning when I watched the nine birds actively engaged in this pastime there it seemed as if they could not be bearing many buds of any kind on the branches which they visited.

Two Bittorns were pumping to-night on Great Meadow. I find that I was in error in stating in my article in the April number of "Bird Lore" that the third syllable of the Bittorn's pumping carried to the greatest distance. It is really the second although when the bird is near at hand this note does not sound so loud as either of the other two.

1902.

May 9

Brilliantly clear with swift west wind which blew a living gale from about 9 a.m. to 5 P.M. Looking southward from the farmhouse I could see clouds of dust kicked up by the wind from the sandy fields beyond the Fitchburg station in covered driving crosslessly against the green slopes of Fairhaven Hill. That is very unusual for a cloudless day at this season the temperature fell steadily from about noon to sundown. At evening the air seemed almost frosty.

The only arrival noted to-day was a Western Tanager which was singing across the river at sunrise and later (I assume that it was the same bird but it may have been another) in front of the cabin.

Arrivals.

Birds of all kinds sang freely up to about eight o'clock after which the wind silenced most of them for the remainder of the day. They were congregating in great numbers in the sheltered swamp behind Ball's Hill when I passed it on my way to the farm shortly after breakfast. So far as I could discern their respective numbers of the various species present have not changed since yesterday. Indeed the counts which I made on both mornings came out almost exactly the same for nearly all the different kinds.

I have heard no Field Sparrows for several days and had begun to suspect that we had lost this neighborhood but I found a pair in Thicket Field this afternoon. When one flew the other followed it closely calling that peculiar low cheeping sound peculiar to this species.

1902.

May 10

Brilliantly clear with high N.W. wind. Water in tubs at the farm as well as across the river (at Mr. Grath's) was skimmed over with ice this morning. The vegetation does not seem to have suffered, however.

I spent the entire day in and about the cabins. There seemed to be only a few birds even on the sheltered side of the Hill where the sun beat down warmly enough. There was almost no singing.

At evening I walked along the river path with Mr. Bennett. The weather had moderated & the air felt rather warm but the birds continued almost totally silent. The Northern was humming, however.

More than 100 Swallows, of which Savers constituted about seventy, Boars twenty and Banks ten per cent, were skimming about over the Beaver Dam meadow. There were also numbers of Chimney Swifts, probably not less than 100, flying over the tops of the neighboring oaks.

At Benson's Landing we saw three Rose breasted Grosbeaks, two fine males and a female, feeding in company in the top of a small gray birch less than ten feet above the ground. They kept close together, much of the time within six or eight inches of one another, and the two male birds seemed to be on the best of terms. The ♀ is the first I have seen this season. As I was watching these birds I could not help wondering why they are equipped with such ponderous & massive bills. So far as I know they never eat other than soft food.

1902.

May 11

Brilliantly clear with light N. W. wind. Cool at morning and evening, pleasantly warm through the middle of the day.

Birds are coming by dates this month without much regard to weather. It is true that there were no arrivals yesterday but although the recent cold wave has scarcely been said to have passed before this forenoon a number of new birds appeared to-day. The list is as follows:-
Golden-winged Warbler, one singing at S. end of Ball's Hill early this morning, another in the apple orchard at the farm at about 10 a.m.

Arrivals

Black & Yellow Warbler, a beautiful male flitting about in gray birches in the cedar hollow near the Barter Spring at 5 P.M.

Black-throated Blue Warbler, a male among some dense young white pines in the Barter woods (on the eastern side of the cow pasture) at 4 P.M.

Red-eyed Vireo, a ♂ in full song on Ball's Hill (west end) at 12 M.

Yellow-winged Sparrows, one in full song at 4.15 P.M. in the mowing field on the Lawrence farm just north of the boundary wall of the Barter farm (very near my hen house). I have never known one to occur in this field before.

Hummingbird, one darting away from a bird cherry tree in blossom in front of the barn at the farm. It looked like a female but I could not certainly distinguish the sex.

The Tanagers, Grosbeaks, Chestnut-sided Warblers, Ovenbirds, & Black & White Anzures have perceptibly increased in numbers since yesterday. Yellow-rumped Warblers & White-throated Sparrows have not changed in numbers for several days.

1902.

May 9
(no 2)

There were two pairs of Phoebe at the Farm in early April but of late I have seen only the birds which are nesting under the eaves of the old barn. Yesterday, however, I saw a Phoebe flying in and out of the cellar under the new barn and the same thing happened again to-day when I made an investigation and discovered a nest apparently nearly if not quite completed built on a brace between two rafters. It certainly had not been begun on the 3rd of this month for on that day I put up a box within a yard of the brace hoping that a Phoebe might be tempted to nest in it.

As I was skirting ~~the~~ Green Field this morning I discovered a ♂ Sparrow Hawk hovering about thirty feet above the ground beating the strong winds and evidently working for prey. It remained poised less than a minute and then passed out of sight over the woods to the westward. Although the Sparrow Hawk and the Pigeon Hawk closely resemble one another when on wing I think that the former may be readily distinguished from the latter by its more buoyant and erratic flight. It rarely proceeds far in a perfectly straight line but is ever inclining to one side or the other as well as rising and falling, at least slightly. Its wings, also, look longer than those of the Pigeon Hawk. The latter flies very straight and when it has occasion to vary its course does so in a long, smooth curve not abruptly. I cannot recall ever seeing it hover or hover as the Sparrow Hawk is so given to doing.

1902.

May 11
(no 2)

At the farm early this afternoon the ♂ Phoebe was perched near the end of a low drooping branch of the big elm where his mate was sitting on the nest under the eaves not twenty feet away. Harold Bowditch and I were standing about thirty feet from the ♂ bird watching John J. Nichols who had crept to within eight feet of it behind the trunk of the tree and was getting his camera ready for a snap exposure. Had he been a few seconds sooner he might have secured a most interesting picture for a bird which we took at first for a Robin but which proved to be a ♂ Pigeon Hawk suddenly appeared from an hardly known direction and with the speed of an arrow glided on its wings, on a slightly declining plane, directly at the Phoebe. That trustful little bird, swaying at ease on his slender perch, seemed so wholly unconscious of his fearful peril that we all thought him lost but when the Falcon was within a foot of him he did the only thing that could possibly have saved him viz. dropped like a life fruit nearly to the ground and then started directly for the barn cellar. The Hawk overshoot him scarce more than four feet & stopping & turning short about with truly marvellous quickness followed & overtook him before he had gone three yards but the Phoebe doubled short & abruptly and the little Falcon apparently disgusted at his ill success darted off down the hillside towards the east ward giving us a fine view of his ashy-blue back. Only a few minutes later the Phoebe was back on the same perch again. The whole episode was most impressive happening, as it did, at what might be called the very threshold of the Phoebe's home and during a really beautiful & brief May afternoon.

1902.

May 11
(no 3)

While passing through the opening between Ball's & Davis's Hills we saw (at 2 P.M.) a female Mock & White Creeper turning back from a grape vine. After she had obtained as much as she could carry in her bill she flew with it to the ground at the base of a cluster of briars where, no doubt, she has begun a nest.

Mniotilta
nest building.

The Phoebe's nest in the house that at Ball's Hill had five eggs to day but the bird has apparently not as yet begun sitting.

Early this afternoon we found an immature ♂ Purple Finch in the briars on Birch Island and later heard another among red cedars near the Bonnet Spring. Both were singing rather freely & well. I have noted the species before this season but once - on March 22. It is evidently fast disappearing from the Ball's Hill region.

At evening we went to Beane Dam Meadows. The wind had lulled and there was a young moon high in the star-lit sky. After the Northern Cuckoo pumping a Virginia Rail began his auto-auto cry. A Green Heron flew above and calling seow. Only a few Hogs & Leopards Frogs were calling. When it had become nearly dark two Wilson's Snipe rose from the marsh across the river scarping. I was hoping that one of them would drum when suddenly the weird, tremendous, thrilling sound came distinctly to our ears. We heard it only once but I was satisfied at that for I had supposed I should have to miss it this year.

1902.

May 12

Forenoon clear and warm with light S. W. winds.
Afternoon at first hazy, finally becoming cloudy, with
S. E. to S. W. wind.

Tennessee Warbler, a male singing freely at the usual
short intervals in the Barnet run nearly opposite the foot
of the Lane. that leads from the barn. The beginning of the
song (pitchey - pitchey - pitchey) was normal but its terminal
half was so like that of a Hoshie Warbler that I did
not feel quite sure of the bird until I got my glass
on him. He was in high plumage with very blue head
& face white (i.e. ashy-white) under parts. He was in
the top of a gray birch at first; soon afterwards he
flew into a tall oak and finally into the blossoming
apple orchard where we lost him. This is the
first Tennessee Warbler I have ever noted in the Ball's
Hill region.

Arrivals

Bay-breasted Warbler.- Among the old oak woods
which lie between the Basett farm & the road that leads
from the school house to Bensons are a few good-sized
white pines. As we were passing one of these trees at
about 9 a. m. I heard the unmistakable zee-zee-zee
of a Bay-breasted & presently discovered the bird, a fine
male, not, as it turned out, in the pine but in
a neighboring oak the leaves of which were just beginning
to unfold.

The third & last arrival for the day was the
Canadian Warbler of which we heard a ♂ singing in Davis's woods.
Perhaps I should add to this but a solitary Cedar Bird
seen in the blueberry pasture at the farm the first day March

1902.

May 12
(no 2)

The apple orchard at the farm was at the height of its glory yesterday. This morning the blossoms had lost something of their fresh beauty & many of the petals were falling - like big snow flakes. There were Warblers there both days but as so many as I have seen in former years - several House Wrens, a Golden-wing (yesterday), one or two Mockers & a Yellow Warbler being the full list. There were also Least & Cypselus & Chippies, the latter hopping about under branches of heavy blossoms at the tips of the branches apparently doing nothing but luxuriating in the beauty of their surroundings. Most fitting & attractive of all the sounds of the old orchard was that of the droning of the innumerable bees.

At about 8 a.m. as Bowditch, Nichols & I were standing near the cabin we heard a sound which we at first mistook for that of a Pigeon's wings. The next instant a bird which looked, through the trees, like a whitish Pigeon, appeared over the crest of Ball's Hill. It proved, however, to be a ♂ Marsh Hawk. He was flying in an unusual manner and continued to do so until he had passed beyond our sight over the Great Meadows. Passing an almost perfectly direct course and beating his wings with a continuous box, easy, gull-like motion, now and then inclining to either side he would nevertheless dip downward on a ^{the} ~~a~~ ^{long & gentle decline} ~~long & gentle decline~~ ^{very few hundred or so,} ~~at each~~ ^{at each} sweep turning over on one side and at the termination on the other, without for an instant ceasing flapping. However, at each descent he made the sound already

1902.

May 12
(no 3)

mentioned but after the first repetition it ceased to remind us of the whinnying of wings (it was no doubt softened by distance & intervening trees the first time) for it possessed an unmistakable nasal & rather vibrant quality & seemed to be of vocal origin.

Nichols thought it resembled the grating sound of a squirrel's teeth on the shell of a hickory nut but to me it suggested rather the kā-kā-kā-kā-kā of a White-bellied Nuthatch. There were I think at least seven syllables and they were given very rapidly & all on the same key. It is many years since I have seen a Marsh Hawk dive & chatter before but as I recall the previous experience the birds have plunged much more readily vertically & wavy than our wavy the same spot. This bird simply kept straight on, as I have said. His manner of flight resembled as all things of those of a Night hawk.

The young were seen two Great Blue Herons flying over high towards the N. E. early this morning. Nichols shouted at them when they turned back & circled. He says they will usually always do this when shouted at.

Nichols & Bowditch also found two Chickadee nests this morning, both in low shrubs, the holes descending nearly straight from the top. One was about 100 yards east of the cabin, the other as far to the westward, both being close to the line on the edge of the path. One contained 5 eggs the other either

1902.

May 12
(no 4)

5 or 6 ft. We could see the eggs distinctly from above. The bird was sitting on an east side of the fence with her tail pointing straight up & pressed flat against the side of the cavity.

I have not heard a Field Sparrow sing since the 5th yet I see them almost daily. There were two hopping about on the ground on an opening in the orchard at the farm (where oats have been sown) yesterday & another this morning in the blueberry pasture across the road from the farm house. Apparently they have all become utterly silent for the time.

Gross Finches are still singing but not so freely as they were a week ago.

Vegetation has advanced slowly of late. Indeed the general aspect of the woods & thickets has changed but little during the past week. Saw on the white willows and some poplars the foliage is not as yet sufficiently dense to afford concealment to a small bird and the songsters are conspicuous enough in the oak woods where the leaves are still in that exquisite pink & salmon stage which follows their first unfolding.

The shrub bush is one of them; the red ones nearly so. I saw the first Cedar Skipper yesterday.

1912.
May 13

Brilliantly clear with strong N. W. wind in P. M.
Early morning calm and warm; evening cool - almost frosty.

Black-poll Warbler - A male singing in the pines behind Ball's Hill this morning. Arrivals.

Wilson's Black-cop. - A high plumaged male in alder thicket behind Ball's Hill, singing freely at 8 A.M.

These were the only two birds new to the Spring but several of the species which arrived before were perceptibly increased in numbers to-day. This was especially marked in the case of the Grosbeaks and Cat-birds.

The Cat-bird which nests in the thickets just to the eastward of the cabin arrived yesterday and this morning he was joined by his mate. At about 8.30 A. M. I saw four birds of this species together near the back gate. They were in the trees on the edge of the vine & osage in a singular manner. When one flew he was followed in quick succession by all the others. The first bird would alight in the top of a small tree, usually a birch, & the others would cluster closely about him when all four would lengthen out their necks & point their bills almost straight upward at the same time spreading their tails and uttering a variety of low wheezy sounds with an occasional harsh squeak none of them notes being like any ordinarily used in the bird's song. After posing in this absurd fashion for a minute or two during which they would sometimes hop about a little among the boughs working their way slowly upward though the branches they would fly to another tree & continue the singular performance.

1902.

May 13
(no 2)

I saw another Creeper collecting grapes over back for
her nest at about noon to-day, directly in front
of the cabin. She flew several times to the foot of
a cluster of oak sprouts near the base of the hill.

A female Downy Woodpecker flew from a poplar
stick on the west end of Morris Hill as I was passing.
I could see a fresh and very neat-looking hole near
the top of the stick but it was too high up to be
easily investigated without a ladder.

On a ridge covered with dense second growth oaks
between the Green Field and Birch Island I started
a ♀ Partridge. Although she rose in the usual manner
and at a distance of fully twenty yards I somehow
felt instantly that she had flown from her nest,
which proved to be the case. The nest was at the
foot of a small oak and was simply a hollow lined
with dry oak leaves. It contained 11 fresh-looking eggs.
It was near the middle of one of the densest corners
in this neighborhood & remote from any path or
opening.

Shortly after dawn this evening I heard the creaking
calls of our Swallows at the farm & looking up saw
31 of these birds flying in a compact flock like Blackbirds
& at a considerably higher. After circling over a time
they went off rapidly in a straight course towards
the west-coast. Were they migrating or working
for some distant roost?

1902.

May 13
(no 3)

The Field Sparrows are not the only birds it seems that have become scarce of late. Although the country is simply flooded with Robins this season I have not heard one sing since the 9th and for several days before that date I heard them only for a brief period in the early morning & later evening.

A Robin at Balls Hill was busily at work this morning apparently repairing an old (last year's) and very dilapidated - looking nest in a small white pine near Gilbert's cabin.

Although the Phoebe and Bluebirds practically ceased singing a week or more ago I still hear them both in the early morning.

1902.

May 14

Brilliantly clear with light N. W. wind. Everything white with hoar frost at day break but middle of day pleasantly warm.

Black-burnian Warbler - One singing this morning in white pines on the left of the path near Pulpit Rock.

Arrivals.

Great-crested Flycatcher - One in the old orchard near the barn. First heard at about 8.30 a.m.

Black-billed Cuckoo - One heard in the afternoon in the blueberry pasture west of the house.

Whippoorwill - One singing at evening in the white pine woods west of Lawrence's.

We moved to the farm yesterday evening and intend staying there for several days. At sunrise this morning only a few birds were singing, at evening I heard very many. At 7 a.m. I noted, as I stood on the door step of the house, Robins, Bluebirds, Yellow Warblers, Chestnut-sided Warblers, Redstarts, Maryland Yellow-throats, Cow-birds, Black & white Cuckoos, Worm Warbler, Song Sparrows, Field Sparrow, Chipping, Goldfinch, Towhee, Golden Robin, Least Flycatcher, Phoebe and Partridge.

During a walk which I took an hour later I heard two Black-burnian and in the farm woods among some dense young white pines found a Black & Yellow Warbler singing. A Black-throated Blue Warbler was also in full song in the run.

A Partridge drummed at intervals through the day & steadily at morning & evening on the wall at the foot of the run.

1902.

May 14

(No 2)

The House Wren was in the apple orchard which is still glorious with pink & white blossoms.

His song was so very peculiar that I suspected at first that it was that of some bird little known to me. I noted it as ur-r-r, ur-r-r, ch. It was given very hurriedly & the termination was oddly abrupt.

A Robin sang for a short time at sunrise and I heard a Field Sparrow at about 7 a.m. and again just after sunset. The Phoebe sang a few times during the day & Bluebirds were heard repeatedly in the forenoon.

Sometime after sunset as I was in the blueberry pasture a Golden-winged Warbler uttered his flight song very near me. I suppose that he was in the air at the time but I did not see him nor did I receive any very distinct impression as to what the song was like beyond the fact that it began with a melody of unusual notes some of which were decidedly unusual, and ended with the ordinary zee, zee-dee-dee.


At twilight fell a Whippoorwill, the first that I have heard this season, began singing in the distance west of Lawrence's house.

Hylas were puping by hundreds in the pool east of the old orchard both last evening & this. I have not heard so many before for some time.

1902.

May 15

Sunny most of the day and warmer with light S.W. wind. Both afternoon dead calm & brilliantly clear.

As I was starting for a walk at 8 a.m. I saw a ♀ Hummer about the blossoming bird cherry trees near the barn. A moment later she alighted on a low branch close to the shed and the ♂ appeared darting down close over her, rising ten or fifteen feet above her and swooping again without pause in the usual loop-like course  curve of ♂. His throat glowed in the sunlight like a coal of fire. He made the usual incessant shrill chirrup while rising and falling. The ♀ remained listless & appeared wholly indifferent.

In the apple orchard near the barn I heard a Black-poll and saw a ♂ Black & Yellow Warbler. The latter was singing lots once as he moved slowly from twig to twig among the clustering sunny & pink blossoms. In the Purple Rock woods there were but few birds & the only north-bound migrant I found there was a Black-throated Green Warbler which was singing in the usual drowsy, listless way.

On my way back from these woods I heard a Townsend Warbler singing. He was in the very tip of one of the tall oaks that form the row of trees on the north side of the orchard but I did not see him until he started on a long flight. I heard him sing eight or ten times. His song, although of the usual shrill, incessant character or quality, was peculiar in form. tip - tip - tip - tip - ti - te-chip - te-chip - te-chip. Evidently he was a different bird from the one noted in nearly the same place on the morning of the 12th. As I stood

1902.

May 15
(No 2.)

Listening to him it occurred to me that one of the most marked characteristics of the Tennessee Warbler's song is that it is delivered at shorter intervals than that of almost any other of our Warblers. At least this is usually the case when the bird is singing steadily.

Our Bluebird was in full, rapturous song all day long and early in the forenoon I saw him carrying his mate to the bird box over the shed into which she carried a large mouthful of fine dry grass. I supposed at the time that her first nest must have been broken up but in the afternoon while driving to Concord I passed directly under a young Bluebird that was perched on a telephone wire. It started a moment later & flew off easily enough although rather feebly. This is a very early date for young Bluebirds to leave the nest. During a walk of about a mile up the road this evening I saw six or eight Bluebirds but saw none outside & alone.

Early this afternoon I heard a House Wren singing in the Holden orchard near the little brick school house at the entrance to the road that leads to Merwin's. It is the first I have ever found anywhere in this part of Concord. I wish it would settle in our orchard.

Three Partridges were drumming late this afternoon within hearing of the house one near the head of the run, another at its foot, the third at the western end of Birch Field. All three of these stations were frequented by drummers last year.

1902.

May 15
(no 3)

I saw a ♀ Chestnut-sided Warbler at work on her nest this afternoon (1 P.M.). It was in a barrel by the roadside just below the house. It had evidently been begun to-day as there was only a thin film of snow which these caterpillar like down about the fork of the slender twig. The bird seemed to be gathering this material only. I saw her there it one of the nests which were all about on the room during these.

Shortly before sunset I could hear one of the Robins jumping in Great Meadows as I stood in the road just below our farm house.

Starting at about 6.30 P.M. I walked up the road about a mile. There are many large apple orchards in this direction and they were glowing this evening with their domed masses of white & rose tinted blossoms. They were also swarming with birds. Robins, Bluebirds, Chaffins, Orioles, Yellow Warblers and Least Flycatchers seemed to be the most numerous. Swifts were coming overhead & I saw several Barn Swallows & a pair of White Throats. The fluttering of the Golden Robins was new for a full minute out of my ears. Several of these birds had exquisitely rich and mellow voices but I rarely now hear the shrill songs of my boyhood days. They have quite as utterly gone out of fashion as the steel airs of those times. From the pasture lands along this sweetly peaceful bit of country road come the songs of Song Sparrows, Field Sparrows, Grass Finches &

1902

May 15th
(254)

every now & then the "scatter call" of a Quail.
Altogether the walk was a delightful as well as
memorable one.

On my way back I stopped at Edwin Lawrence's
place. I found its proprietor smoking a cigar in the
garden just behind the house. Twilight was falling as
I stood talking with him. A *Theselia* was singing
gloriously in the garden near at hand. Suddenly
I heard the light, silvery whistle of wings and
looking up saw two Wood Ducks flying at us
great heights directly overhead. Although the light was
dim I distinctly made out their white bellies
& characteristic shape & manner of flight. They
came from the westward (directly over an extensive
tract of upland woods) and disappeared in the
direction of Birch Island. I should have been
never more surprised had a pair of Canada Geese
flown over me.

It was nearly dark when I reached the
farm house. Two Whippoorwills were singing, one
to the westward, the other just below the orchard
to the south-east & somewhere near Pulpit Rock.

Hyas were popping in fair numbers this
evening.

When at Lawrence's I heard a Solitary Sandpiper
calling high overhead & catching in the day a Winter
Yellow-legs high over Pulpit Rock woods.

Concord, Mass.

1902

May 17

Brilliantly clear. The warmest day of the month thus far despite the fact that a strong N. to N. W. wind was blowing.

The birds sang with the utmost freedom and cheer from sunrise to late evening. Indeed there has been no such a prodigal feast of their music before this season. Everything seemed to be singing, even the Robins and Field Sparrows. Our Bluebird simply warbled incessantly all day long while his mate continued to work on the nest in the bird house on the shed.

During my morning walk I noted only a very few migrants. There were a ♂ & ♀ Black-poll Warbler in the orchard near the barn, a ♀ Black-throated Blue Warbler in the woods near Birch Field and two ♂ Magnolia Warblers singing within two rods of our station among the dense young white pines just to the southward of Pulpit Rock. I had expected to find at least one Black-brown Warbler in these woods but failed to do so.

On the 14th a Great Crested Flycatcher was calling in the orchard nearly all day for the first time this season. I supposed at the time that he was the bird which breeds there every season but I have not heard him since until to-day when he was very much in evidence. About the middle of the afternoon I heard two birds, no doubt the pair, & finally saw them in one of the elms near the house.

1902.

May 17
(no 2)

Although I saw a Wood Thrush at Davis's Hill on the 8th and heard another singing gloriously yesterday near the stone boat house of Foster Ball's Hill I have not as yet detected one on the farm where I have been living for the past four days.

I was out this evening for a couple of hours - from 5.30 to 7.30 - in the blueberry pasture to the westward of the farm house. It is always attractive and just now charming beyond description. The blueberry bushes are thickly hung with the bell-like creamy white blossoms and the bushes, veiled in a most exquisite green-tinted covering of tender green. It is, moreover, the most "birdy" place that I know anywhere in this immediate region. Just before & after sunset to night it seemed like a great army. The air fairly rang with the songs of birds & at times I was fairly bewildered by their voices coming from far & near in a column of sound as continuous and ear-filling as that of Hylas. There were Robins, Cat-birds, Thrushes, Golden-winged, Mockers & Chestnut-sided Warblers, Field Sparrows, Song Sparrows, Towhees, and a pair of Quail. The last-named flew from a wall near me and afterwards called to me another until it was nearly dark. I examined the muddy spots along the brook for Woodcock signs but could find none. I wonder if the birds that I heard them in March passed on westward. I was sure on the 11th that they were killed & preparing to breed.

1902.

May 17
(no 3)

There were two Golden-winged Robbers singing on the farm to-day, one at the foot of the hill to the eastward of the barn this forenoon, the other in the blueberry pasture across the road all day long. The latter bird ceased singing this evening at about 7.20 or before it had begun to grow dark and some time before the Song Sparrows, Field Sparrows & Towhees ceased. Between 7 and 7.20 he gave the flight song three times, presumably in the air although I did not see him in the act. I noted this song carefully on this occasion.

Either my previous impressions of it have been based on casual observation (as I think was the case) or it varies considerably on different evenings. On each occasion this evening it consisted of either two or three short periods sets of whistling notes, ecstatic rather than musical & each followed by the usual zee-c-c. I should write it thus: - twi-twi-twi-twi-ti-zee-c-c; twi-twi-twi-twi-ti-zee-c-c, twi-twi-twi-twi-ti-zee-c-c. There were also connecting their repeated phrases one or two short whistling notes so low as to be scarcely audible.

For several evenings past a number of Robins - at least a dozen I should say - have assembled soon after sunset in the dense blueberry & brick thickets below the field in front of the house, evidently to roost. They make a great clamor calling excitedly for fifteen or twenty minutes but not singing.

Robin roost
at the
farm.

The Bats are back in the loft over the shed. I saw one come out of it last evening & found ten in a cluster there to-day. The Bats in the shed.

1902.

May 18

Cloudless with light N. W. wind. Warmer even than yesterday.

As I strolled about through the orchard and near the house for about half an hour immediately after breakfast this morning I noted the following birds singing: Robin 1, Bluebird 1, Thrasher 1, Chickadee 1, Creeper 1, Nashville Warbler 1, Golden-winged Warbler 2, Yellow Warbler 2, Black & Yellow Warbler 1 (in apple orchard), Chestnut-sided Warbler 4, Black-throated Green Warbler 1, Black-poll Warbler 1, Ovenbird 2, Redstart 2, Red-eyed Vireo 1, Yellow-throated Vireo 1, Warbling Vireo 1, Chipping 1, Song Sparrows 1, Grosbeak 1, Indigo Bird 1, Oriole 2 ♂ & 1 ♀, Least Flycatcher 1, Great-capped Flycatcher 2, The only birds in this lot which were obviously bound for the north was, of course, the Black Poll & Black & Yellow Warblers and the only new arrival was the Indigo Bird Migrants.
Arrival of
Indigo Bird

In the afternoon I drove to Ball's Hill and found them up near to the Buttricks. I heard at least six Robins singing and saw them make together. There was a good many Spotted & Solitary Sandpipers and I saw five Least Sandpipers, two singly & three together. A Green Heron was perched on a willow over the river near the mouth of Cemetery Brook & a Northern Shrike on the edge of the water some distance. A White-bellied Swallow has a nest in one of the willow shrubs just above the Hill & was looking out as I passed. I also saw a pair of Black Ducks flying over the meadows. Red-wings were unaccountably scarce. I do not remember seeing or hearing more than two or three.

1902.

May 18

(No 2)

I have no doubt that the pair of Hummingbirds which I have seen almost daily about the farm house during the past week on the same buds that nested in the big elm last year & raised their brood in safety. As I was watching the male this morning I was surprised to see him visit a number of dandelion blossoms in succession putting each with his bill as he found just one it.

It has never occurred to me until this season that the listless, warbling song of the Chestnut-sided Warbler, which we hear oftentimes later in June but occasionally at this season, is very like the song of the Myrtle Warbler. I had several opportunities a week or so ago to make direct comparisons between the two and really I could not certainly distinguish them.

The House Wren was in full song early this afternoon in the orchard near the brick schoolhouse where he has apparently settled for the season.

The conditions which govern the singing of birds are a constant puzzle to me. Yesterday, as I noted in this journal, they sang all the day through while the current in the Blueberry Pasture last evening was something to long remember. To-day they sang with equal freedom and spirit through the forenoon but only fitfully & sparingly in the afternoon. I was in the Blueberry Pasture from 6.30 to 7.30 and during the greater part of this period it was as silent as the grave. Yet

1902.

May 18
(no 3)

The evening, as far as I could see, was a perfect duplicate in every way of that of yesterday. That the birds were all there is a matter of no doubt for I either saw most of them or heard them chirping among the thickets.

The Phoebe nest in the cellar under the new barn held ~~two~~ eggs yesterday. I have never over seen more than a single bird near this nest. He sang a little to-day & at evening I found him perched on one of the branches of the cedar post that supports the piazza roof. The other Phoebe was feeding this young in the nest under the eaves of the old barn this afternoon.

Gilbert showed me a nest of a Yellow-throated Vireo to-day. It is in the cleft at the east end of the house near the extremity of a stone bench about thirty feet above the ground. I saw the bird enter it with her bill full of birdseed material which she worked into the lining.

Robins are not much given to nesting on buildings in this region (certainly much less so than on Cape Cod) but on discordance one this afternoon sitting on an exceptionally small nest built on a ledge just under the eaves of the farm house on the left side of the front door.

Concord, Mass.

1902.

May 20

Clear with light N. E. wind. We had a heavy rain yesterday, the first for several weeks.

I heard a Yellow-billed Cuckoo and a Night-hawk this morning, both for the first time this year. The Night-hawk was peeping, apparently in one of the elms near the house, although I did not see the bird.

Arrivals

I discovered the Hummingbirds' nest this forenoon. It is within ten feet of where the nest was last year and on the same side of the same big elm but on a different branch. The female was at work on it. She kept darting to & fro between it and one of the large branches of the elm from which she was gathering what

Hummingbird's
nest at same
in same tree
when pair
nested last
year.

I took to be bits of lichen although I could see nothing in her bill. Alighting in the nest she would turn around and around at the same time applying the tip of her bill to the exterior many times in succession. Then she would fly to one of the large branches & pour in front of it moving from place to place & just touching the bark with her bill. I did not see the male to-day.

Bancaster, Mass.

I used to think that Downy Woodpeckers seldom drummed at any season other than that of early spring but I have heard them repeatedly at Concord during the past ten days and this evening two birds were drumming at short intervals, one answering the other, in large oaks maybe about 100 yards apart on the river interval here. They kept it up for nearly half an hour.

Downy W.
drumming
in May

Lancaster, Mass.

1902.

May 20
(no 2)

I went to Lancaster by the noon train. On reaching Miss Holman's I heard a Wood Pewee in the elm in front of the house, the first that I have noted this year. The other birds settled immediately about the house were the same that we had last year viz. Robins, a Warbling & a Yellow-throated Vireo, a House Wren, several Chipping and a pair of Orioles. There were also King birds & Yellow Warblers and at least one Redstart. Meadow Larks & Bobolinks were singing in the fields across the road and great numbers of Chipping Swifts were about over the trees & houses at evening.

The Robin who reared two broods successfully last year under the eaves of the piazza roof directly in front of the side door, laying both times in the same nest, has built a new nest on the old one (using the latter merely as a foundation) and has already hatched her first brood of young.

Robin nests
three under
piazza roof.

Later this afternoon I walked through the lane to the river. The bank has crumbled afresh nearly back to the big elm and a large colony of Sand Swallows has settled there. There were many birds in the country, among them a Black & Yellow Warbler & a Canadian Flycatcher, both females. In the woods beyond the immediate pasture several Wood Thrushes were singing. In the same direction I heard, at a great distance, evidently, a Pileated Woodpecker. A Thrasher was perched in the very top of a tall hillory flowering the whole surrounding country with his song.

Birds singing
at evening
in river
creek.

Leicester, Mass.

1902.

May 20
(no 3)

Bobolinks are quite as numerous here (I have seen comparatively few at Concord) as they were last season and, as on that occasion, at least three out of every four of those which inhabit the fields near the house and ~~there~~ bordering the lake utter at the very beginning of their songs (or rather just before beginning to sing) a note which, at a distance, sounds exactly like the word geese, but which near at hand is more like geese-ah. This is so loud or, at least, penetrating that it can be heard at distances at which all the other notes of the song (which is in other respects quite normal) are inaudible. Coming from different directions, far and near, one these wide grassy fields it has a peculiar effect on the ear of the listener. If I remember rightly I heard it in other parts of Leicester last season but most frequently in this immediate neighborhood. It is, I believe, peculiar to the birds of this region (since I have never noted it at Concord which is only twenty miles distant) and the fact that it is quite as generally used this year as it was last is interesting evidence that I am now hearing the same individuals (with, no doubt, some of their offspring) that I listened to last season.

Bobolinks.
Peculiar note
characteristic
of Leicester
birds

Last year a Yellow Warbler built her nest in a certain cluster of Spirea ovata, on the borders of the lake, laying four eggs all of which disappeared soon after the set was completed. On examining these bushes to-day I found in the same fork of the same stem a freshly completed but empty nest of a Yellow Warbler. I can scarcely doubt that it is the same individual that nested here last season.

Yellow Warbler
nests two
years in
same bush.

Lancaster, Mass.

1902.

May 21

Brilliantly clear with light N.W. wind.

Growing near together in a hollow in the cemetery are three or four tall and exaptimally flourishing balsam firs which seem to possess great attractions for Robins, Chipping Sparrows, Flickers & various other of the smaller birds. I remember seeing in them last year among other things a Bay-breasted and a Black & Yellow Warbler. Visiting this morning I found them simply swarming with little birds. Most of them were of the common kinds - Chipping, Purple Flickers, Yellow Warblers, Orioles, Goldfinches, Redstarts etc., but among them I presently discovered a Lincoln's Finch. For some time he kept among the dense foliage at a height of fully thirty - five feet above the ground but at length he descended to a low branch along which he hopped slowly picking rapidly at the bark as if he found an abundance of food of some kind. He was one of the tamest birds of his kind that I have ever seen. Indeed he scarcely seemed to notice me at all even when I stood within two or three yards of him & directly in the open.

Balsam firs
peculiarly
attractive to
small birds
of various
kinds.

Lincoln's
Finch feeding
in Balsam.

Mr. Harrington tells me that Mr. John E. Thayer & he found a Carolina Dove's nest in Lancaster last Sunday (18th May). It was on the branch of a witch pine & contained two well-grown young. In a sandy field a mile or two distant from the place they started a flock of a dozen or more of these Doves.

Early nesting
of Carolina
Dove

Lancaster, Mass.

1902.

May 22

Clear and warm with strong S. W. wind.

Visiting the cemetery this morning I found in the cluster of balsams a Wilson's Black Cap, a female Canadian Warbler, a pair of Goldfinches, two or three Purple Finches, a Redstart and an Oriole.

Migrants
in balsam

This quiet old town with its broad, elm-embowered streets is a perfect paradise for Warbling Vireos and these birds are more numerous here than I remember to have ever found them elsewhere. Here the elms are continuous the birds occur at intervals of about one hundred yards. There must be nearly or quite a dozen pairs scattered along the main street between Miss Holman's and the depot. The males have been singing to-day from day-break until nearly dusk - more continuously, indeed, than any other birds. I should characterize the song briefly as an evenly-flowing warble, too rapid and strong to be called listless and (rather joyous) than the reverse yet without somewhat pensive in quality as if the bird was indulging in reverie. It bears an unmistakable resemblance to the song of the Purple Finch but is much less emphatic and ecstatic as well as more leisurely. It lasts from three to four seconds and when the bird is singing steadily is delivered at intervals of from three to five seconds for hours in succession. Although by no means a song of the highest musical order it is nevertheless one of the most pleasing as well as soothing of the bird voices of early summer.

Warbling Vireo

As I have said the Warbling Vireos have sung chiefly in the elms but Mr. Harrison tells me he has found their nests in sugar maples only.

Cambridge, Mass.

1902

May 24

Partly cloudy, oppressively warm & sultry; heavy
thunder showers at evening.

I went to Cambridge this morning. On the way
to the station at Boston I heard a number of Black-caps
singing in the big elms that shade the village street.
Several others were singing in the elms over Heath Street
in Cambridge as I walked up from the Fagars. There
was a Wood Pewee in the Smith place and I heard
one Yellow-throated Vireo there & another in the big elm
in front of Mr. Brown Higgin's house.

One *W. W. M. M. M.* is gl
white & , dog
etc. It is to kill a
Norwood
Dedham
Roslind
Forest
Boston
Blossoming Hawthorn (both
and *H. H. H.*, *A. A. A.*
etc. birds many of which
were north-bound migrants. Besides the resident Robins
(one, possibly two, pairs), Cat birds (one pair), Yellow Warblers
(one pair), Redstarts (one pair in the lindens), Red-eyed Vireo
(one singing in lindens), Chippies (one pair, the ♂ singing, the ♀
sitting on her nest in one of the little blue spruces on the
Canon), Orioles (one pair), Rose-breasted Grosbeak (♂ in full
song in the juniper where W. Deane has heard him daily for
some time), and Yellow-billed Cuckoo (one singing in the juniper
& presumably a settled bird) there were a Gray-checked
Thrush, a Swainson's Thrush, a Black & Yellow Warbler (apparently
a ♂ but silent), a Black-bell Warbler (singing), a Wilson's
Black-cap (♂ in full song), a Canadian Warbler (♀),
and a King bird (perching on the top of the taller trees
in the juniper & very noisy). Besides these sixteen species
a ♀ Black-throated Blue Warbler had been seen earlier in
the morning, bathing in the pond, by W. Deane.

Cambridge, Mass.

1902

May 24

Partly cloudy, oppressively warm & sultry; heavy
thunder showers at evening.

I went to Cambridge this morning. On the way
to the station at Boston I heard a number of Black-poll
singing in the big elms that shade the village street.
Several others were singing in the elms over Heath Street
in Cambridge as I walked up from the Hagers. There
was a Wood Pewee in the Smith place and I heard
one Yellow-throated Vireo there & another in the big elm
in front of Mr. Brown Higgins' house.

Our garden was glorious with blossoming Hawthorn (both
white & pink) lilacs, dogwood, red bud and Hibiscus, Azaleas
etc. It was also simple alive with birds many of which
were north-bound migrants. Besides the resident Robins
(one, possibly two, pairs), Cat birds (one pair), Yellow Warblers
(one pair), Redstarts (one pair in the lindens), Red-eyed Vireo
(one singing in lindens), Chipping (one pair, the ♂ singing, the ♀
sitting on her nest in one of the little blue spruces on the
cannon), Orioles (one pair), Rose-breasted Grosbeak (♂ in full
song in the juniper where W. Deane has heard him daily for
some time) and Yellow-billed Cuckoo (one singing in the juniper
& presumably a settled bird) there were a Gray-checked
Thrush, a Swainson's Thrush, a Black & Yellow Warbler (apparently
a ♂ but silent), a Black-poll Warbler (singing), a Wilson's
Black-cap (♂ in full song), a Canadian Warbler (♀,
and a King bird (perching on the tops of the taller trees
in the juniper & very noisy). Besides these six or seven species
a ♀ Black-throated Blue Warbler had been seen earlier in
the morning, bathing in the pond, by W. Deane.

Cambridge, Mass.

1902.

May 24
(no 2)

The Gray-chested Thrush, an exceptionally large bird, looking, in fact, almost as big as a Robin, was so tame that it allowed me to approach within fifteen or eighteen feet without showing the slightest alarm or nervousness. Early in the afternoon W. Deane & I heard it singing and following up the sound found the bird perched on a low branch of the cedar tree near the pond. It sang at short intervals for ten or fifteen minutes but always ~~stopped~~ over the notes seeming to come from a distance although we were standing nearly under the tree. The song was so very like that of the Veery that I should have attributed it to that bird had I not seen the singer so distinctly. It fell at the end, as does the Veery's song, but the notes were given less smoothly and continuously than those of the Veery & the tone was perhaps somewhat harsher & more metallic. The bird also called a few times much after the manner of the Veery.

The Swainson's Thrush also sang a little in low tones. W. Deane tells me that it has been in the garden for several days and that it was in full song yesterday afternoon at about five o'clock.

Gray-chested
Thrush singing
in the Garden

Swainson's
Thrush singing
in the Garden

Concord, Mass.

1902.

May 25

Cloudy most of the day & very pretty. Light rain in the evening.

I went to Concord Lake yesterday afternoon with Ernest Seton Thompson who passed the night with me at the cabin. There was a heavy thunder shower shortly after eight o'clock. During its continuance the Garden Hacks along the river kept up their harsh (hummed) / squeaking without the slightest cessation.

Later in the night the moon (nearly full) came out for brief intervals during which I occasionally heard a Northern Parula or an Oven-bird sing on wing directly over the cabin.

I was awake at daybreak this morning when the birds began singing in the following order: - Phoebe, Bittern, Robin, Veery, Red-wings, Black & White Cuckoo as soon as the light showed in the East; Tanager, Bobolinks & Red-eyed Vireos at sunrise; Rose-breasted Grosbeak shortly after sunrise.

Seton and I spent the whole forenoon in the woods working to the farm by way of Davis' Hill and Birch Island, returning through the oak woods past the Spring & over Pine Ridge. Tanagers & Grosbeaks seemed to me less numerous than usual but all the other summer residents were in about their usual numbers. There was a good many Black-poll Warblers singing, especially in the orchard at the farm. He heard three Canadian Martins, one in Davis' Hill Swamp, the other two behind Davis' Hill, both breeding grounds for this species. There was a Least Water Thrush by the river and a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher among the pines on Pine Ridge.

Concord, Mass.

1902.

May 25
(no 2)

The Yellow-bellied Flycatcher was shy or, at least, elusive for we failed to get a sight at him although we followed him for some distance through the pitch woods near the crest of the ridge. He called, however, almost incessantly uttering a low, plaintive tee-e which reminded us both of that of a young Goldfinch. One which seemed to be merely an individual variation of the usual pee-e of E. flaviventris.

I had confidently expected to have Wood Thrushes at the farm for the weather was exceptional favorable & the Vireos were singing all the forenoon but not a Wood Thrush could we find although we visited all their usual haunts. I begin to fear that something has happened to the birds which have frequented this locality every summer for the past six or eight years at least.

We also listened vainly last evening for Raits. The Great Meadows are now in perfect condition for them and the Red-winged Blackbirds have returned to their breeding grounds there in force.

There were two Belted Kingfishers jumping in the meadows last evening and this morning while, as I have already noted, I heard one of them several times during the middle of the night.

The Black & White Osprey nest which I found built on the hillside in front of the new cabin was empty to-day & the disordered condition of the lining indicated that it had been robbed. Both of the

1902.

May 25th
(no 3)

Chestnut-sided Warblers' nests on the roadside at the farm had evidently suffered a like fate.

The ♀ Hummingbird was on her nest in the big elm and apparently sitting steadily (at 11 a.m.). I was mistaken in stating that this nest is not on the same branch as the one last year. It is on a different fork of the same branch on about the same level and some 25 feet from the site of the former nest. The latter was in 2nd when I left the farm last autumn but it had disappeared when I returned this spring in March.

On putting my hand into the Phoebe's nest in the storm house that at Kells this morning I could feel young apparently several days old. The young in the nest under the eaves of the barn at the farm are well-developed & apparently nearly ready to fly. There were four storm-cold eggs in the nest in the new barn cellar and a fifth broken on the ground beneath which the birds were not seen.

We examined the Chickadee's nests to-day. From one in a rather neatly-dished hole in a pitch pine stub in the woods at the farm the bird flew when we rapped on the trunk. We could not see into this nest without enlarging the entrance hole which entered the side of the stub about four feet above the ground and resembled that of a Downy Woodpecker save that its edges were more ragged - a characteristic, I believe, of holes made by the Chickadee.

The other two nests were the ones near the cabin found by Bowditch and Nichols on the 12th. At that date the birds were laying, one nest containing at least five eggs & the other

1902.

May 25
(no 4)

about the same number, as nearly as we could ascertain by looking into the holes which entered almost directly downward from the tops of the stumps. Both birds were sitting to-day at about noon. We could see their tails pressed against the sides of the stumps pointing straight upward. As I was peeping into the first hole with my eye almost touching its edges Seton tapped the stump with his knuckles. The result surprised, not to say startled, us both for the light blow was immediately followed by an expression proof ending in a prolonged hiss, the whole closely resembling the sudden escape of a compressed jet of steam. My first idea was that there was a Snorer in the hole and I jumped back instinctively and precipitately. Possibly the sound is really intended to simulate that a Snorer hiss. This bird repeated it only two or three times when we continued to tap or scratch on the outside of the stumps but the bird in the others were emitted it in perfect volleys, passing six or eight times in rapid succession whenever we provoked her to do so. It must be a regular habit of sitting Chickadees to thus threaten those who disturb their nests but possibly they indulge in it only after their young are hatched for I cannot remember ever having had an experience similar to this before.

There were fourteen Bats in the loft over the shed at the farm to-day, all in one cluster clinging to the rough surface of the boards directly under the peak of the roof. Seton seemed to be more interested in them than in anything else that he saw while at Concord.

1902.

May 25
(ms 5)

Partridges were drumming freely and steadily all the forenoon. We heard all three of the birds at the farm and a fourth in the Davis Hill Swamp. The drummer last mentioned must be the mate of the hen whose nest I found on the 13th on the ridge near Birch Island although when sitting she could scarcely hear the sound of her mate's wings, partly owing to the distance (about 300 yards) but chiefly to the presence of an intervening knoll covered with dense woods. He visited this nest to-day. The bird sat much closer than on the 13th allowing us to get within fifteen feet when she rose directly from the nest and toward up & off through the tree tops. There were, as on the first occasion, eleven eggs.

On the edge of the Barrett Run, within easy hearing of two cock birds which were drumming at the time, and about midway between them, we came upon a hen Partridge with eight or ten young. The mother flew a few yards and then began trundling about on the ground making the usual whining outcry. The young, which appeared to be only a day or two old, ran freely off in every direction calling peep, peep, peep in loud shrill tones. They went only a few yards before stopping & hiding. Selton walked over & I arrested. Both crawled in under dead leaves where they concealed themselves & hid. But with their eyes wide open. We lifted one of them gently. It made no effort to escape but sat contentedly & without fear in the palms of our open hands. When we put it down on the ground it remained exactly where it was placed. The mother, meanwhile, was arching about whining but concealed from our light among some bushes.

1902.

May 25-
(no 6)

We then withdrew a few rods and lay down behind a knoll from whence we could see the place where the young were scattered about. For about ten minutes the old Partridge made no sign. Then she walked forth from her cove and standing erect & ~~motionless~~ began calling quie - quie - quie, ke-2-2-2, kree-ar-2-1, kree-ar-ā-ā, quie - quie - quie, kree-ar-ā-ā etc. The quie note was somewhat metallic in quality, the kree-ar-ā-ā rather hoarse & not unlike the bark of a Gray Squirrel. Seton thought that the bird sang us and was continuing the young to remain quiet. Certainly no one of them moved or peeped until some time later when the mother changed her call to the low, nasal, ~~with a~~ like qua - qua - qua - qua - qua - qua (repeated rapidly & without cessation very many times) which I heard a hen Partridge use under similar conditions a year or two ago. As on that occasion it was almost immediately answered by the father peep - peep, peep - peep (invariably doubled now but I think given singly at peep, peep when the young were scattering) of the young two of which we saw lolling towards their mother picking their way rather slowly through the fallen branches & other obstructions that littered the ground. He saw ^{one} of them join the old bird but there were probably others with her when she started off into the bushes. Fearing to lose sight of her we followed at once & at a run but we heard nothing further for she rose & flew to some distance before we got sight of her again.

1902.

May 26

Forenoon clear with strong, cool S.W. wind.
Afternoon cloudy with violent thunder showers just
before dark.

Started off with John E. Thayer & his assistant
Mr. Harrison at 9 A.M. We drove directly to
the heavy farm on the road to Still River & trying the
horser descended the hillside to the meadows where Puerin
& I heard two Horned Larks Sparrows last summer.
These meadows border a brook for then a few
hundred yards. They are full of springs & the ground
is broken into many little hillsides covered with
low blubbery bushes & carpeted with Sparganium mosses.
Between them & the road lie well-drained intervale
fields in English grass & clover but still covered in
places (especially in the hollows) with tufts of very
wild grass.

In the brook meadows proper we found a pair of
Horned Lark Sparrows, and in the intervale fields we heard
at least two different males singing. We spent the
greater part of the day looking for nests but without
success. Then times we flushed the female of the pair
nearly underfoot and within a few yards of the
down place among some of the bushes just mentioned.
Thinking that the night hawk was on ahead of us on
hearing her nest we charged at first, sped into the
place during our second & third visits but no nest
could we find when we finally got the bird on
wing. One of the other males was singing in the
middle of a large patch of clover. The ♂ by the brook
usually perched in a bush when singing. All the males

1902.

May 26
(Wed)

Saw at intervals for a few minutes at a time during the middle of the day. Some of them lay very close and on several occasions we heard one of them singing very close at hand among short grass but could not either see him or flush him when we came to the spot where he se-^{em}ed to be.

At noon we drove to the old white pine woods where the Black-brown Woodpeckers breed. There were at least four or five of these birds singing in the tops of the trees.

In these ~~pine~~ woods Mr. Thayer showed me a Great Horned Owl's nest. When he found it on May 18th it contained ^{two} ~~one~~ ^{young} bird. ~~He~~ ^{He} did not which would raise the head & look down at him when he rapped the tree with a stick. He rapped it hard to-day but could see nothing of the young Owl. Neither of the parent birds was seen or heard on either occasion. The nest was very small (not larger than a Green Heron's) & in the fork of a white pine about 40 ft. above the ground within 30 yards of a traveled path lead & in plain sight of the latter. At the foot of the tree lay the remains of a water snake (about 2 feet long) a portion of which had evidently been eaten by either the old or young bird. There were no other fragments of food but several pellets composed chiefly of what was wholly of Rabbits fur & bones also lay scattered beneath the tree.

1902.

May 26
(no 3)

We found fresh tracks & droppings of Deer in the meadows along the brook. Thayer tells me that they have become really numerous in Lancaster. When they first appeared two or three years ago the fact that one had been seen was thought worthy of record in the local paper. Now it hardly excites comment. During the present spring there have been deer together on one occasion on Mr. Herbert Parkin's place & five on another. Mr. Harrison says that while hunting foxes in the Lancaster woods last winter he found deer tracks in the snow almost everywhere.

On Friday (May 23rd) Mr. John E. Thayer found the nest of a Red-bellied Nuthatch in Mr. Parkin's woods at South Lancaster. His attention was attracted by a small, neat hole in a beech stub about 17 feet above the ground. When he struck the tree the bird flew out and was shot. There was a good deal of pitch on the trunk just under the hole. The nest contained six young birds about two days old. The parent bird killed was the male. The female parent visited the hole & fed the young after her mate had been shot. Mr. Thayer has seen three Nuthatches before in the breeding season in Lancaster.

Lancaster, Mass.

1902.

May 27

Cloudy with heavy rain all through the afternoon.

Our walk this morning led up the road towards John Thayer's place - the "Back Road" it is locally called. Birds were numerous and singing freely but I heard only the species that are residents here through the summer.

There were very many Bobolinks along this road. Every one that I studied closely uttered the gink - ah note more or less freely and frequently, usually just before beginning to sing, sometimes interposed in the middle of the song, occasionally just after its termination, not very infrequently in the intervals between the songs & either as a single call or repeated twice or thrice in quick succession. On the other hand the birds that used it oftenest would sometimes sing several times in succession without uttering it at all. On the afternoon of May 23rd I heard it ~~coming~~ coming from every direction in the meadows on Mr. Nat. Thayer's place at South Lancaster (about a mile from here in an air line) but the only two ♂ Bobolinks which we found in the extensive fields at the pauper farm (about three miles east of here) yesterday did not once produce it although we heard them sing very many times.

The Least Flycatcher whose mate is sitting on her nest high up in a maple near my bed room window occasionally utters his chebe during the darkest hours of the darkest nights. Indeed I am rarely awake for half an hour between 10 P.M. and daybreak without hearing him. He gives the note only once at a time & in low, sleepy tones without the usual sharp emphasis.

Lacon, Mass.

1902.

May 27
(no 2)

Last year a Wood Pewee built in a horizontal fork of a tree close high above the driveway that leads past Miss Holman's side door. The nest was robbed and partly torn from its foundations soon after the eggs were laid. The birds remained but if they built a second nest I failed to find it. They were back again in the old haunt when I came here this year on May 20th. At last I heard one of them on that day and saw the pair together on the 23rd. This morning I saw one of them, presumably the ♀, at work on a nest in the same fork where the nest was built last year. She had already completed the outer walls and was putting in the lining. While thus engaged she went through the most violent contortions, twisting her neck & body and gnawing her wings as she turned around and around in the nest.

Two of the young Robins left the nest under the piazza roof yesterday forenoon and the third & last this forenoon. One of the ladies saw the third bird go. She says that the mother Robin went to the nest and soon after left it when the young bird followed fluttering first into the woodbin that hangs in front of it and then flying freely but evenly to the roof of a neighboring shed. Miss Foster tells me that the Robin was apparently incubating the eggs on May 1st and that the nest was examined (by a Mr. Fassett) on May 16th when it was found to contain three young apparently only just hatched.

1902.

May 29

Clear with high, cold north-west wind.
Thermometer fell to 40° last night.

Spent the day hunting birds' nests with John Thayer Second and Harriman. Drove first to the Parry farm where unsuccessful we worked over two hours beating the entire tract of hunt for meadows occupied by the Henslow's Sparrow with nests of the utmost thoroughness. In the lower meadow we Henslow's started a pair of birds and in the upper one two Sparrow. single birds. All four rose almost under foot and two of them acted as if they had nests. One was flushed twice (at intervals of several hours, the second time late in the afternoon) with a yard of the same spot; the other flew only three or four yards at a time and very feebly. Once the flushed pair Thayer so close that he nearly caught her in his hand. We searched every inch of the ground for many yards about each place from whence a bird rose but without finding any signs of a nest. None of the males were heard singing to-day. We are quite at a loss as to whether the eggs have been laid as yet or not.

In this same meadow we started a Savannah Sparrow. Savannah I had a good view of it & saw the yellow throat Grasshopper stripe. Thayer has never found it in the breeding Sparrow. season before.

The Yellow-winged Sparrow is evidently not uncommon here. We flushed one in a clover field on the Parry Farm & heard another singing a mile or more to the southward in an upland mowing field.

Launceston, Mass.

1902.

May 29

(No 2)

At noon we drove to Pine Hill. It has been burned over since last year and there were few birds in the oak scrub where we found so many last June. The Prairie Warblers seem to have altogether deserted the locality but there were a few Towhees & Field Sparrows singing in patches of scrub that had escaped the fire. In one of these we found a Towhee's nest with four eggs.

Pine Hill.

Prairie Warbler

Towhee's nest

The chief object of our visit to Pine Hill was to try to find a pair of Cardinal Grosbeaks which Harriman saw there yesterday afternoon. He started them in a dense thicket of white haced bushes at the eastern base of the hill and followed them for several hundred yards. They were not at all shy & he repeatedly got within twenty or thirty yards of the male and saw him raise his crest and sing as he followed the female about among the thickets. The locality is a rather favorable-looking one for Cardinals but in searching it carefully to-day without getting either sight or sound of the birds. Harriman described both the song & the shape almost chip to accuracy that I cannot distrust the correctness of his identification.

A pair of
Cardinal
Grosbeaks.

There was a Hairy Woodpecker's nest in a maple stub on the hillside near a little pond hole. Harriman says he heard the young calling in it yesterday. One of the old birds was near it to-day. The note is an almost continuous whistling which we were in its neighborhood. This is the third breeding pair that Thayer & Harriman have found this season.

Hairy
Woodpecker
nest with

4-1

Lancaster, Mass.

1902.

May 29
(no 3)

Habits &
haunts of
Carolina Dove

On the place adjoining the Parry Farm is a field of about five acres sloping gently from the road to the edge of an intricate meadow. A portion of it has been recently ploughed; the remainder is lying fallow at present and is devoid of vegetation save for scattered tufts of viny grass and regular rows of dead corn stubble left after the harvesting of last years crop. This field appears to offer unusual attractions for the Carolina Doves. Indeed it is probably visited at one or another hour of each day, but especially at morning and in late afternoon, by most of the birds which inhabit the surrounding region for miles in every direction. They come to and depart from it almost invariably in pairs and the mated birds keep near together when feeding although when six or eight are started at once they sometimes fly off together for several hundred yards in a rather compact flock after which they separate into pairs again and pursue different directions each pair choosing, no doubt, the course which leads directly to its nesting haunts and keeping straight on over woods and fields, passing just above the tops of the higher trees, until lost to sight in the distance. It is difficult to see them when on the ground for their backs are of very nearly the same faded, reddish brown as that of the Sandy Loam and although almost constantly in active motion they follow the furrows and other depressions among the hillsides and tufts of weeds and carry their heads & necks lowered to nearly the line of their ^{lower} bodies. Walking rather rapidly but very smoothly and evenly, turning alternately to the right and left every few steps, picking up small seeds or grains of sand with a quick bobbing motion

1902

May 29
(No 4)

of the head and usually without stopping, in short behaving much like all Pigeons (including our domestic ones) when engaged in feeding they ramble about over the whole field coming within view in the comparatively short spaces of time. Carriages passing along the neighboring road do not seem to alarm them but at the approach of a man on foot they cease feeding and, after standing erect and watchful for a minute or two, take flight sometimes all at nearly the same moment sometimes two or three at a time, each bird announcing his departure to the others by the pecker, hollow, whistling sound of his wings (sometimes but not usually emitted after he has settled on a distant flight) but never I believe by any vocal note.

One or two of the males will frequently fly to the neighboring woods and coo at short, regular intervals in the upper branches of the pines or oaks for fifteen or twenty minutes at a time and occasionally one of them will coo on the ground in the open field standing on some mound or clod of earth slightly higher than the general surface.

The number of birds which one may find at this season in this field varies considerably, as I have already indicated, according to the time of day and also, probably, according to conditions of weather. On May 18th Mr. J. E. Thayer counted twelve there at one time; on the 26th he & I saw, no doubt, several pairs but never more than two birds at once (we spent most of the day in sight of the flock); To-day there were at no time less than six or eight in the field during the forenoon at 4 P.M. we counted eighteen at once. Mr. Thayer found a nest with two young nearly able to fly on May 18th in a pitch pine grown about a mile from the field.

Habits of
the Carolina
Dove

Eighteen
Doves in
one field
at the same
time.

1902.

May 29
(No 5)

I have frequently heard that the Carolina Dove is addicted, during its breeding season, to soaring like a Hawk and, if I remember rightly, Chapman mentions the ~~fact~~ ^{habit} in one of his books but this has never come under my personal observation until this afternoon when Mr. Thayer and I witnessed it under the most favorable conditions possible. We had just started the eighteen birds above mentioned and they had flown out of sight in different directions when Mr. Harriman who was with us exclaimed "see that Hawk!" Looking up we saw what we all took at first to be some Sharp-shinned Hawk passing overhead at a height of perhaps 200 feet. Flapping its wings quickly a few times and then holding for several seconds on set wings, repeating the alternate flapping and gliding at short, regular intervals it had nearly crossed the field in the direction of the woods before we began to suspect the truth, which was, of course, that the bird was not a Hawk but a Dove.

On reaching the woods it resumed its normal flight and we heard its wings whistle distinctly as it disappeared among the trees. A moment later it reappeared and mounting to a height of fully 300 feet came back over the field alternately flapping and gliding as before. During these Hawk-like flights its wings emitted no sound. Nor did the bird once soar in circles although on one occasion it turned slightly to the right and then action abruptly upward before beginning to flap again. It was the only Dove in flight at the time & after the second crossing of the field it flew steadily off towards the south-west.

Carolina
Dove
flying in
the manner
of a Sharp-
shinned Hawk

Lancaster, Mass.

1902.

June 3

Clear and hot with short but sharp thunder storms
at 3 P.M.

Started off with John E. Hoyer & his assistant Harriman
at 9 a.m. We drove directly to the fine old forests of
white pines beyond the Parry Farm on the road to Harvard.
Tying the horse in the usual place we spent the entire
forenoon looking for nests of the Black-burnian Warbler but
without success. The birds were even more numerous than
last year. I counted eleven different males singing within
a space of less than fifteen acres and at one time heard four
within twenty yards of one another. I do not think that I
have ever found a greater number in an area of similar
extent even in the most favored localities at Haverhill.
No females were seen. The males kept in the tops of the
largest or, at least, tallest pines and sang almost continuously
through the entire forenoon. The song of the Black-burnian
has two regular variations which I noted to-day as follows:—
We-we-we-we-we-^{e-e-e} (running up the scale towards the end like
an House Wren's song) and we-chée, we chée, we chée, we-chée,
we-chée very like that of Minioptila varia. The same individual
bird often used both forms, repeating one a dozen times or
more in succession and then changing to the other. All the
notes of both songs have a peculiar metallic quality by which
the voice of their author may be at once distinguished from
that of any other of our Warblers although in form his
song resembles that of House Wren² of the Black & White Creeper
very closely at times, as I have just indicated. Or, to put
the matter in another way, his song, whatever may be its form,
never possesses the guttural quality of the House Wren's nor
the fine ring character of the Black & White Creeper's.

Visit to a
breeding place
of the
Black-burnian
Warbler

Lancaster, Mass.

1902.

June 3

(No 2)

The day was so oppressively warm that we lingered long at our lunch in the grateful shade of the grand old pines. From their luxuriant canopies of sombre foliage came not only the songs of the Black-burnians but those of almost equally numerous Black-throated Green Warblers. There were also several Pine Warblers a few Olive-birds and Red-eyed birds, one Solitary Bird, a Marsh-wren Warbler (singing in oak scrub across the road), two Tanagers and a few Blue Jays.

Harrison climbed to a large nest of sticks, made originally, he thought, by a Hawk, which proved to contain a family of Flying Squirrels. The mother emerged from the top of the nest when Harrison put his hand in it and flew to a neighboring tree. The young, which were three-quarters grown, appeared in quick succession, to the number of five, through the bottom of the nest. Three of the latter remained in the tree while the other two sailed down on wide-spread "wings" alighting in the tops of some low bare oaks where we caught them without difficulty. They did not attempt to bite until we had held them for some time. I kept them now in a box and they have already begun eating bread & milk.

In the afternoon we beat the Newton's Sparrows meadow with some care. At least four different nests Sparrows were singing and we flushed three birds directly under foot but, as on former occasions, could find no signs of the nests. Two of the birds chirped sharply a number of times just as they rose & alighted again after flying a few yards.

Still another
further
search for
nests of
Newton's
Sparrows.

Cambridge, Mass.

1902.

May 31

Clear and cool with fresh E. wind.

Went to Cambridge from Lancaster by the early morning train. Walking from the Museum Comp. Zoology to our place I heard singing a Red-eyed Vireo near the Museum, an Oriole on Channing Street, a Yellow Warbler on Concord Avenue, a House Wren in the Parker place on Craigie Street (there was one settled there last June) and a Warbling Vireo also on the street last named.

As I entered our garden I was greeted by the full, ringing notes of a Wood Thrush issuing from the lilacs near the cluster of large humbucks. I afterwards heard the bird at frequent intervals and once saw him. He was as fine a singer as I have ever listened to and he made the garden fairly ring with his glorious voice. Walter Dean tells me that he has been there since the 29th. This is the first Wood Thrush I have ever found in our garden but one was noted there by Mrs. Kirtland a year or two ago, and also in May if I remember rightly.

There were also in the Garden to-day 2 Robins, the pair of Cat Birds, a pair of Redstarts, a ♂ Yellow Warbler, a pair of Red-eyed Vireos, a Chipping, a Golden Robin and a King bird the last, I suppose, the same bird that I noted there a week ago (on the 24th).

The migration seems to have come to an end. Indeed I think it closed early in the past week for I have seen no northern birds since the 26th.

Close of
spring
migration

02
M

Journ

112

Jan.